DRAMATIC ARCHITECTURES

THEATRE AND PERFORMING ARTS IN MOTION

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THEATRE AND PERFORMING ARTS IN MOTION

CHANGING SPACE AND PERFORMANCE FOR A CHANGING WORLD

JORGE PALINHOS
JOSEFINA GONZÁLEZ CUBERO
LUÍSA PINTO

In 2014, the first Dramatic Architectures conference took place at Escola Superior Artística do Porto. The purpose of the conference was to explore different approaches and methodologies of connection between Architecture and Theatre, which we felt were usually overlooked.

The response to the call for papers was enthusiastic and that conference had a huge number of participants and perspectives, leaving us with the certainty that this could be a highly promising field of research.

After a series of collaborations and publications in the area, which happened under the project Dramatic Architectures, of the Centro de Estudos Arnaldo Araújo, we felt the need again, six years later, of returning to the conference table, to find out what new ideas, areas, and issues were happening, and further promote the approximation between researchers. We decided to organize a new Dramatic Architectures conference, under the subject "Theatre and Performing Arts in Motion", convinced that all the recent changes in technology, urbanism and society should have had an impact in the field.

Little did we know that the year of the conference, 2020, would be the year the world would grind to a halt due to the first large global pandemic since the beginning of the XXth century. After some rescheduling, the conference took

place online, the only possible format for sharing research and ideas. Again we were pleasantly surprised by the sheer amount of enthusiasm, diversity of approaches and freshness of perspectives, and of discovering new ways of how performative arts and architecture, usually fields so apart, can have such a mutually positive and challenging influence.

Obviously, such contamination is not new, and goes back at least to the Bauhaus school, where the concepts of performance, space, scenography, etc., became intertwined in artistic research, practice and education. In fact, the more the performing arts became less connected to a previously written text and a sequential narrative, the more space became important as its unifying signifier, as a challenge and frame for performance. Likewise, contemporary architecture, no longer tied to pragmatic needs, was looking more and more to find ways of engaging with individual human behavior and its concrete needs.

Considering the scarcity of publications on this crossroads of subjects, we found the need to put in print the most relevant papers presented at the conference as a way of sharing with others the current state of affairs in this area.

This book you have in front of you gives a wide and varied overview of all the different approaches to space and performance, usually based on real concrete examples and experiences, bridging both theoretical discussion and practice-based approaches. Together, they give a brief overview of the variety of approaches and possibilities, but also how this still promising field can bring huge benefits both for the study and practice of architecture and performing arts.

Due to the large number of texts and authors, in order to make the book easier to read, we organized the book in thematic chapters.

The first chapter, Theatrical Spaces, goes from the political and scenographical dimensions of the container, explored by Dorita Hannah, to the moving architecture of the theatre-circus in Spain, described by Josefina González Cubero and Leonor de Meer González, to the connections between theatres and churches, analysed by Bridget Foreman, to the use of industrial warehouses by Brazilian theatre companies, in Rio de Janeiro, as studied by Evelyn Furquim

Lima. It is remarkable how the needs of performance and the limitations of space can have such a deep impact not only on the development of architectural solutions, but also on the theatre performances happening in those spaces.

Spaces can also have different impacts on the different types of relationships. From the use of containers in theatrical venues, as described by Dorita Hannah and Luísa Pinto, as social interventions, to the exploration of different connections between the audience and the performance, proposed by Stefan Jovanović and Katarzyna Zawistowska.

Obviously, the theatrical field most intimately bridging performance and space, scenography, is the one most influenced by all these challenges, and investigating scenography can yeld a plethora of ideas and solutions for many current problems. Space as scenography experiments is addressed by Niuxa Drago, on the case studies of audacious set designers like Herzog & De Meuron and Morphosis, or Carolina E. Santo on Renaissance scenographer Giulio Camillo, or even in eastern religious theatre, discussed by Zahra Fuladvand. Even the use of scenography in film, as addressed by Isabel Lousada and Vanda de Sousa can provide deeper meaning to the feminist representation of the work of Virginia Woolf in *The Hours*.

A more theoretically challenging approach is given by Yi-Chen Wu, who discusses Patrice Pavis notion of "performise", and Višnja Žugić, who proposes three mechanisms through which architecture realises its performative potentials.

We also examine different methodologies of working performatively with space, from the "architexting" of Jenny Knotts, which combines playwriting and architectural drawing, the use of the Spiral form in performances, by Hari Marini, to the implications of vertical dance as a scenographical strategy, discussed by Natalie Rowland.

In the chapter concerning Urban Spaces, the city space is questioned and investigated as a site of performance, where performance is itself part of the landscape. We examine three different performances taking place and questioning the urban space. Gabriella Kiss presents a case study of a performance in an

abandoned underpass that raises questions of "layers of the place", Marina Hadjilouca uses the example of the growing gentrification and privatization in Nicosia, Cyprus, and the role of performance as a strategy of contesting the privatization of public spaces, while Jorge Palinhos examines the use of memory and parade as a performative device for the presentation and reflection of a post-industrial neighboorhood in the city of Porto, Portugal.

In the chapter Performance Materials, a series of elements of theatre and performance are discussed in their spatial and architectonic potencial. Rafaël Magrou approaches the importance of Sound experiments in theatre through the example of French director and playwright Joël Pommerat, Tomás Ribas investigates the use of artificial light in urban spaces as an instrument of mass manipulation and surveillance and Lucy Thornett explores augmented reality as wearable technology that augments space at the level of the body.

The last chapter, Performance and Architecture Pedagogies, presents different examples of using performative elements as tools to teach architeture. Gray Read presents a series of exercises based in theatre techniques to invite young architects to consider how buildings act socially, while Natalia Solano-Meza describes the uses of architecture and performance at the University of Costa Rica to address political issues.

This is a wide range of perspectives that we hope can contribute to opening up new places of theatrical and architectural practice and research, bringing fresh concepts, methods and tools that can be quite useful as a way of rethinking the uses of contemporary architecture and performance.

Jorge Palinhos, Josefina González Cubero and Luísa Pinto

THEATRICAL SPACES

HOLD: EVENT-SPACE AND CONTAINERIZATION IN THE TIME OF COVID-19

DORITA HANNAH

"The New"

> *To approach the problem of "the new" then, one must complete the following four requirements: redefine the traditional concept of the object; reintroduce and radicalize the theory of time; conceive of "movement" as a first principle and not merely as a special, dismissible case; and embed these later three within an all-encompassing theory and politics of the "event".* (Kwinter, 2001, p.11)

Theatre Architecture is conventionally considered a static object – as playhouse, concert hall, dance space, opera house, stadium, or even art gallery – designed to contain performance and its audiences within a disciplinary hold. However, due to increasing interdisciplinarity and the blurring of boundaries between fiction and reality, the performing arts exceed genre taxonomy and even architecture itself. Performance therefore can neither be spatially contained nor physically restricted – especially in our age of media spectacles, fluid technologies and uncontainable bodies. Edith J. R. Isaacs recognizes this as far back as 1935 in the introduction to her anthology, *Architecture for the New Theatre*, writing that "in the art of theatre, which uses for its completion all of the other arts, the building that serves it should be a way to freedom rather than a house of bondage"

(1935, p.10). Centralizing spatial oppression as "the problem" facing theatre architecture, Isaacs maintains design needs to be approached "not only as an arrangement of mass and form, and not only as a functional unit, but as a social unit" (1935, p.12). Six decades later, architectural theorist Sanford Kwinter maintains that "the new" in architecture emerges from rethinking its objecthood by paying attention to temporality, mobility and the event dimension (2001, p.11). The perceptual shift from a static spatialization of time (architecture as enduring built form) to the livelier temporalization of space (architecture as dynamic environmental spacing) acknowledges 'spatial performativity', which philosopher Jacques Derrida refers to as "*espacement* (...) the archi-manifestation of force, or of life" (2004, p.46). By emphasising movement, relativity and duration, both Kwinter and Derrida hypothesize architecture as *evental* – active, spatiotemporal and interruptive of the status quo – and therefore as dynamic becoming rather than passive being. This has socio-political implications that require attention to ensure a less repressive and more emancipatory paradigm shift in performance space as well as a deeper engagement with its materiality, historicity and meaning.

In *Event-Space: Theatre Architecture and the Historical Avant-garde* (Hannah, 2018) I observe how space is shaped by the transitory event – whether historic (epic incidents), aesthetic (theatrical displays) or banal (daily occurrences) – in order to expose architecture itself as a multiplicitous event and an intricate player in our everyday lives. As an event, the space housing events is therefore an integral driver of performance and how it is experienced. What does this mean at the end of a year in which a global pandemic, as major irruptive event, creates myriad events that radically shift our spatial perceptions of proxemic bodies, contestable borders and uncontainable ecosystems, while proving the conventional auditorium to be a house of potential contamination? This paper considers the evental nature of a seemingly banal shipping container – designed to efficiently convey goods across oceans and continents – and its links to globalization (colonialism's ongoing project) and neoliberal gentrification, as

well as more communal and haptic potential described by Stefano Harney and Fred Moten (2013) as flights of "Fantasy in the Hold".

In the days preceding Christmas 2020, Britain experiences its highest rate of coronavirus cases, alongside the introduction of a virulent new strain, resulting in a nationwide lockdown and Europe closing its borders to the United Kingdom. This leads to thousands of trucks stranded at the southern frontier on December 21st, an event consistent with the many breakdowns and interruptions experienced throughout 'the year of Covid-19'. The long lines of freight vehicles at a standstill – each carrying the ubiquitous shipping container – represent yet another disturbance in the smooth flow of global capital in which broken networks set off chain reactions that disclose an inherently unsustainable system. Earlier in the month, a multiple stack collapse on the freight ship *ONE Apus* led to 1,816 containers falling into the Pacific Ocean, including 64 dangerous goods (DG) boxes. While this 'record loss' (Van Marle, 2020) was barely reported in mainstream news, a media focus on the pandemic has exposed 'logistics' – the detailed organization and implementation of transporting goods and people – as a failed enterprise. Proliferating spectacles, such as miles-long tailbacks of lorries, draw attention to this icon of global trade and essential component in supply-chain capitalism.

Such systemic failure coincides with another event on December 21st, in which a UK court convicts two lorry drivers with people-smuggling and manslaughter after the discovery, a year previously (23 October 2019), of 39 Vietnamese men, women and children (aged between 15 and 44) who had perished of asphyxia and hyperthermia in such an enclosed container on the back of a truck. Here, a confluence of historic and quotidian events exposes the shipping container as neither a passive nor prosaic receptacle: aligning it to what Alexander Klose calls "a crucible of globalization", which harbours "container worlds" (Klose, 2009) that range from harbourside ports and industrial showgrounds to carriers of pandemics and human cargo: intruding into and reconfiguring physical sites and cultural paradigms.

Container Worlds… off-the-shelf, pop-up, fit-for-purpose, plug-in-city…

There are an estimated 20 million units of the standardized intermodal freight container – a steel box designed for efficient worldwide transportation by boat, truck and train – in motion over water and on land, rendering it the neoliberal global object *par excellence*. In theatre, its access and dimensions need to be taken into account for the efficient delivery, storage and movement of scenery and touring shows, which also link to a standardized architecture serving the performing arts market. Yet, the shipping container has become the building block for temporary venues such as the *Illuminated Container Wall* – a curving multilevel enclosure of staggered units designed by Bernades Jacobsen for Rio de Janeiro's Music Festival (2011) – as well as more enduring theatre buildings, the best examples of which are the *Container Kunsthalles* in Seoul (2009) and Berlin (2011) by Platoon Cultural Developments. What follows is a discussion of the aestheticization and utilization of the container as a modular building unit for a range of architectural typologies – from pop-up event spaces to high-end and high-rise housing, as well as emergency border accommodation and triage medical stations. Hailed as eco-friendly, sustainable, compact, structurally-sound, accessible and affordable, these easily reproducible transportation units are increasingly employed in the built environment as a modular clip-on kit-of-parts to be stacked, unstacked, relocated and reused as needed. However, the shipping container's 'meanwhile use' – co-opted for temporary and emergency accommodation – has become more and more long term, leading to the rather alarming phrase 'container urbanism', which signals an impoverishment of architecture and the built-environment itself. It is also employed as a theatrical tool for covert gentrification in which developers transform brownfields sites and socioeconomically disadvantaged communities into zones of privilege under the guise of 'culture-led regeneration'.

Ten years ago, and consistent with this container-turn in architecture, I was involved in the design development of the *Container Globe*, a classically Shakespearean pop-up venue to be constructed out of thirty repurposed

shipping containers, the dimensions of which roughly conform to the multilevel seating galleries of the Globe Theatre that opened in 1599 on the south bank of London's River Thames, drawing audiences from all walks of life, until it burnt down in 1613.

The Container Globe: "party like its 1599!"

An economical, mobile and demountable alternative to a bricks-and-mortar venue, the *Container Globe* (Fig. 1) is described by its originator and producer, Angus Vail, as a "punk reimagining of Shakespeare's Theatre" (Vail, 2016). In the first half of the last decade, I collaborated with Vail – a zealous afficionado of both punk rock music and Shakespearean drama – on the design development of this venue, which was conceived as a transportable kit-of-parts, composed primarily of stacked shipping containers with rock 'n roll lighting infrastructure and exterior scaffolding walkways clad in steel mesh. In his 2016 TEDx Talk on the project, Vail describes the Container Globe as a "glow-in-the-dark, big Mad Max thunder-dome theatre", created from cheap, strong and universally available 20^{ft} shipping containers that resemble "giant punk rock Lego building blocks". Like New York City's Joseph Papp (1921-1991), who established *The Public Theatre* in the late 1950s, New Jersey-based Vail sees this venue as an opportunity to bring the Bard's work to diverse audiences, especially those who perceive conventional theatre as elitist, intimidating and unaffordable. He envisages the mobile venue occupying empty sites in deprived neighbourhoods as a means of urban rejuvenation, by cohering the community around the theatre. Clad with industrial steel mesh embedded with LED lighting, the venue is designed as a media object: fulfilling multiple roles, including cinema, gallery and even a skating rink; attracting food-trucks and micro businesses while transforming blighted locations into lively urban parks.

It is worth noting that Papp, who came from an impoverished and itinerant childhood, inaugurated the New York Shakespeare Festival in an abandoned band shell on Manhattan's East River Park, insisting that all performances are

Figure 1. *Container Globe.* Images: created by Jonathan Go
http://www.thecontainerglobe.com

without charge. When the company lost the site in 1956 and were no longer able to bring the people to free Shakespeare, Papp decided to take free Shakespeare to the people on the back of a flatbed truck that toured all five boroughs of NYC. A year later the vehicle 'broke down' in Central Park, claiming squatters' rights and presenting gratis summer productions that led to Shakespeare-in-the-Park. This eventually became the site of the Delacorte Theatre, which opened in 1962 and – with continuing free admission – remains a permanent fixture alongside the Lower Manhattan multi-hall venue Papp established five years later in the former Astor Library, known as *The Public*. The name itself reinforces Papp's mission for the theatre to be part of the city itself and accessible to diverse audiences. Unfortunately, the 2012 renovation to *The Public*'s front-of-house (costing $40 million USD) has given precedence to sponsors and serving a free-market economy through a design – focusing on security, surveillance and gastronomy – that is no longer democratic in atmosphere or actuality. Such gentrification

of spectators and neighbourhoods typifies the significant shift from a run-down late-mid-century NYC to a more thriving centre built on the 'creative economy' model, in which the cultural sector – hailed as an important driver of wealth, employment, tourism and development – now principally serves the capitalist elite. Stephen Pritchard refers to this as the 'hyperinstrumentalization' of art that "has entered into a Faustian pact with neoliberalism, gaining power and influence but only by becoming entirely incorporated into market economics, entrepreneurialism, commodification and consumerism" (2019).

The *Container Globe* is currently being tested on an empty lot in Detroit; a city that declared bankruptcy in 2013 and is regenerating through investor developments. Although Vail doesn't advocate (as Papp tenaciously did) for all events to be free, he does envisage "the Yard tickets to be less than the price of a movie ticket – so almost everyone can afford to see great Shakespeare – and we think we'll attract lots of students, millennials and young people just curious about this bold new theatre, who want to engage in and lead the audience's involvement in the plays" (Vail cited in McKee, 2016). As will evolve throughout this paper, such idealism becomes caught up in art that serves, rather than challenges, the neoliberal elite, resulting in productions that generally avoid radical socio-political commentary in spaces, which eventually eradicate the very accessibility and diversity they purport to foster and support. Citing Aaron Betsky's reference to the shipping container as "a building block, an expression of systems, a moveable bit of changing society, and something that could be found, rather than having to be constructed by using up resources", Alexander Klose asserts it "must serve as a metaphor for everything bad, misanthropic and technocratic" (2009, p.283). As will unfold, despite its link to an affordable and sustainable ideal, we cannot ignore the container's instrumental role in gentrification, exploitation, corruption and contamination, while holding its multiple mythologies in mind.

Cargo Architecture

This paper is therefore a coming to terms with the underlying narratives of container architecture and the complex role it plays in a globalized world, as exposed by the coronavirus pandemic. Yet, described by Klose as "the single most important technological innovation underpinning the globalization of trade" (2009), the simple intermodal box has long fascinated architectural modernists. In his 1967 article, 'Flatscape With Containers', renowned architectural critic, Reyner Banham, for whom container ports denoted a technologically advanced city, saw these inscrutable objects with concealed contents as monumental units in-flux (Banham, 1967). In *How Buildings Learn* (1994), Stewart Brand, whose research library was a shipping container, praised the simplicity and adaptability of their form. As visual cultures theorist, Richard. J. Williams, contends, "Banham and Brand helped make the container cool, plugging the shipping container into architecture's enduring but never-quite-realized fascination with modularity" (Williams, 2019). Performance designers, Shauna Janssen and Joanne Kinniburgh (2019), discuss the myth of their sustainable reuse in relation to the harmful nature of their materials and finishings, designed to resist marine conditions and unwanted pests, which create toxic waste when cleaned for repurposing. Fabricated for things, not people, the unit itself – damp, dark, airless and uninsulated – is inherently unhospitable, requiring a lot of work to be made habitable. Yet at the heart of its appeal seems to be the particularity of its minimal industrial aesthetic, which plays into a global imaginary, mythologizing its mobility, flexibility, materiality, ecology and universality.

Janssen and Kinniburgh collaborated with me on the design and curation of *PhoneHome* (Fig.2), an intermedial exhibition for Chile's 2017 *Architecture and Urbanism Biennale*, which was themed on 'Unpostponable Dialogues' and focused on emergency accommodation for which the shipping container provides a bottom-line form, adapted into the ubiquitous flatpack emergency

cabin[1]. Assembled from extruded polystyrene sandwich panels, these off-the-shelf shelters are cheaply produced and sited in detention centres as well as countless refugee camps around the globe. Epitomising alienating and spatially reductive experiences, such accommodation barely contains what Giorgio Agamben (1998) calls a 'bare-life'. Arranged in precisely gridded coordinates they equate with Elaine Scarry's description of an architecture of "protection" as "a materialised image of decreased sentience" (Scarry, 1987, p.349). Their flagrant banality and attention to the most basic requirements of accommodation cause us to wonder at such design solutions, which are incapable of protecting against the indifference of extreme weather and vermin, let alone indicate any sense of comfort, domesticity or communality. As Shauna Janssen writes in the exhibition catalogue:

> *The miniature refugee cabins in* PhoneHome *reference architecture's capacity to reproduce a nation-state of social exclusion; provoking artistic, curatorial, architectural and urban design practices to address spatial injustice.* PhoneHome *is a "call" to redress the histories and contemporary continuum that the space of shipping and containerisation hold where refugees tend to exist as mere cargo and human surplus.* (Janssen, 2017)

This reference to human cargo recalls the aforementioned tragedy of human smuggling where countless refugees risk and forfeit their lives, unable to escape the airtight containers where they are sequestered by criminal syndicates who profit from their fleeing intolerable situations without ensuring their

[1] *PhoneHome* was composed of nine identical maquettes of emergency refugee cabins on a mirror-lined niche in the gallery wall before which was placed a padded kneeler like those found in church pews. Each cabin is embedded with a smartphone streaming a looping video accompanied by sound connected to hanging headphones. Literally a home for a phone, *PhoneHome* refers to the need of those perceived as 'aliens' to connect and return to a familiar realm by utilising the mobile phone as a critical device. The architectural model is therefore scaled around a standard affordable smartphone, with each cabin streaming videos by artists and correspondents addressing the themes of spatial mediation, alienation and detention.

Figure 2. *PhoneHome* exhibition: 2017 Architecture & Urbanism Biennale. Valparaiso, Chile
Designed and Curated by Dorita Hannah with Joanne Kinniburgh and Shauna Janssen. Images: Pablo Bianco

health and safety. The shipping container – often co-opted for emergency accommodation, solitary confinement and illegal trafficking – is haunted by histories of exploitation, slavery, colonization and racism (those 'container worlds' mentioned by Klose), which cling to the seemingly rational simplicity of form as architectural building block.

In his *New York Times* Opinion piece, 'The Sinister Brutality of Shipping Container Architecture', Williams, reminds us that "the harsh landscape of the shipping container is a terrible shorthand for modernity. It's not just the now-inescapable connotations of the migrant crisis. It's that the people who've most celebrated the container form are precisely not the ones who've ever had to live in one: they can always go home, to a proper building somewhere else" (2019). This becomes particularly acute when reviewing the designs of large-scale affordable housing designs: such as the solution gaining top prize for an ideas competition to upgrade Mumbai's Dharvi slum (2015), or the award-winning proposal to re-house those sheltering in Cairo's El'Arafa cemetery

(2019). In India, Ganti + Associates (GA) Design propose a 100-meter-tall vertical complex comprised of four eight-storey high, self-supporting container stacks while Egyptian architects, Mouaz Abouzaid, Bassel Omara and Ahmed Hammad, have planned 'sheltainers' made up of clusters and towers to be built between and over the tombs of a the Necropolis. Somehow the student-housing projects in more affluent countries, such as 1000-unit Keetwonen container city by Tempohousing in the Netherlands (2006), do not seem as problematic as the proposals to transform slums with their individualized makeshift dwellings into modular container landscapes that emphasize a technological hold on bodies while withholding flexibility and personal expression.

Container Landscapes as Scenography

In his *ArchDaily* Opinon piece, 'What's Wrong with Shipping Container Housing? Everything', Mark Hogan (2015) refutes arguments for the container as a feasible accommodation unit, indicating the limitations of size, structure, insulation, stacking, systems and modularity. He does point out that "(f)or a temporary facility, where an owner desires the shipping container aesthetic, they can be a good fit". However, this 'aesthetic' is culturally loaded. The flip side of low-end temporary container housing – often becoming permanent for those with limited or no options – can be found in imaginative architectural solutions for cultivating longer-term high-end developments, which co-opt the industrial seaport guise, described by Williams as "a mark of hipster modernity (…but) utterly ill-suited for human life" (2019).

This 'look' is often found in film, video and television such as the high-octane 3-D Hollywood film, *Step Up Revolution* (2012), which presents dance "as freedom, success, community, and even social engagement" (Backstein, 2016, p.300). Set in Miami, it features agitational performers, known as The Mob, who interrupt a business tycoon's announcement of his luxury waterfront development by dancing around and on top of stacks of shipping containers. Protesting his plans to raze 'the strip' – a poor black and Latino community

where many of the dancers live and work – their carefully planned spectacle proves productive in winning over the developer who decides to build up and revive rather than tear down the existing neighbourhood. Ironically, The Mob's anti-capitalist protest becomes itself a consumer festival in this happy-ever-after story when they receive a contract to dance in Nike commercials.
Step Up Revolution's multilevel filmset of stacked containers bears an uncanny resemblance to a *Temporary Shipping Container City* built for Amsterdam's annual 10-day *Over het IJ Festival* on a disused wharf the same year the film was released. O + A Strategies in Architecture describe their design as follows:

> *The three-dimensional checkerboard pattern offers a great spatial diversity, while simultaneously communicating the Festival's ambition to the city. As such, the hospitality area is tall, airy and compelling, while the artists use the labyrinthine aspects of the more intimate area of the container city. With a height of four layers, the mountain of containers manages to justify its presence between the large warehouses of the former shipyard.* (O+A)

It will be interesting to see the effect of the *Over het IJ Festival* on the NDSM Wharf site in the longer term and what developments emerge from it. A similar yearly festival that utilises shipping containers takes place on Wellington's waterfront in New Zealand. Since 2011 the *Performance Arcade* has offered a diverse program of free live performance, installed within and beyond varying architectural arrangements of shipping containers that briefly occupy the harbourside site – designed by Wraight Athfield Landscape + Architecture – which was originally slated for commercial developer-led projects but became a municipal project due to protests and pressure from The Architectural Centre, Waterfront Watch Organisation and Wellington Civic Trust in the 1990s. Wellington's harbour design that prioritises public access and activity, provides an example of somewhat successful grass-roots resistance to local council's partnership with private enterprise. Like *Over het IJ Festival*'s Zeecontainerprogramma (Shipping

Figure 3. *The Performance Arcade*: Wellington Waterfront, New Zealand

Container Program), the *Performance Arcade* annually calls for event/installation proposals from local and international artists. Its ever-changing landscape of containers is based on the flexibility and adaptability of the shipping container: artists negotiate with the organisers around the siting and modifications of each unit, while operating beyond the confines of both container and the arcade precinct. In 2021, taking the global pandemic and 'social distancing' into mind, the event will extend into Wellington's urban environs, asking artists to consider 'What if the City was a Theatre?'

Having welcomed artists who critique both container and city over the last decade, the *Performance Arcade's* question is deliberately discursive. Expanding the conventional notion of theatre – beyond produced art form and entertainment – it acknowledges that cities operate on a trajectory between urban performance (events of varying scales) and performative urbanism (city as multiscalar event). This is evident with the 'creative economy' model, through which a scenographic

landscape is established by private enterprise in order to achieve large-scale gentrification that masquerades as cultural development. Here, the shipping container is often called upon to play a central role in performances co-opted in the service of market-led infrastructural development, which, like *The Public* theatre in NYC, is no longer truly democratic in its publicness.

Developer Theatrics

UK-based theatre scholar, Michael Shane Boyle, examines container aesthetics and infrastructural politics in contemporary performance via an article focussing on 'The Boy Who Climbed Out of His Face' (2016), a 2014 Thames-side event in London's North Greenwich, staged by immersive theatre collective, Shunt:

> *What geopolitical and historical conditions must first conspire to allow artists to repurpose a linchpin of international trade like the shipping container into the physical infrastructure for performance? And what can Shunt's container aesthetics reveal about the enmeshment of contemporary performance in the urban and transnational infrastructures of global capital?* (Boyle, 2016, p.59)

Boyle carefully unpacks the production's design dramaturgy, sited in and around shipping containers on a disused concrete coaling jetty, in order to expose a mutuality between the performance and proposed gentrification of the Greenwich Peninsula by Chinese developers, Knight Dragon, who publicise the development as "London's single largest residential-led regeneration project" (WSP). While Knight Dragon sponsored 'The Boy Who' by providing the site and permits required for its refit as a performance space, they marketed the project as a temporary platform and pop-up venue – reinforced by the *London Evening Standard* description of a "hi-tech village for arty, foodie, design-savvy Londoners" (Mount, 2004) – thereby boosting their aspirational online claim to establish "an emerging modern community centred around design and culture"

(WSP). Unlike the Hollywood film where a guerrilla performance successfully protests and halts developer-led gentrification, Shunt becomes entangled in supporting such development. As Boyle writes, the company "aestheticizes capitalist infrastructure itself" (2016, p.59), illustrating how pop-up container venues provide "affordable stopgaps that erase the past to usher in a dicey future" (p.71).

Boyle points out that on 16th August 2014, two days after 'The Boy Who' opened, thirty-five Afghan Sikh 'stowaways' were found in a shipping container on the docks of nearby Tilbury, one of whom died in passage from Belgium. We therefore return to the haunting of the 'hold', and the fact that a "history of shipping cannot be separated from a history of the shipped" (Harney). In their essay 'Fantasy in the Hold' from *The Undercommons*, Harney and Moten equate the freighted spatial condition to the colonization and financialization of bodies, and therefore to the slave ship:

> *To have been shipped is to have been moved by others, with others. It is to feel at home with the homeless, at ease with the fugitive, at peace with the pursued, at rest with the ones who consent not to be one. Outlawed, interdicted, intimate things of the hold, containerized contagion, logistics externalises logic itself to reach you, but this is not enough to get at the social logics, the social poesis, running through logisticality.* (Harney/Moten, 2013, p.97)

The hold, where bodies are thrown together, is also historically a floating microcosm for disease: from the grain ships carrying the Justinian Plague (541-542 AD) that devastated the Byzantian Empire; to the Diamond Princess cruise ship, which docked in Yokohama on 4th February 2020, carrying more than half the known cases of Covid-19 in the world outside China. Coronavirus has shown us that contaminants can be neither controlled nor easily contained: evading borders, invading bodies and proliferating silently, quickly and without

prejudice. However, as Harney and Moten maintain, such a rise of "dispossessed feelings in common" allow us to develop "hapticality (as…) a way of feeling through others, a feel for feeling others feeling you" (2013, p.98). Theatre has generally 'left the building', which, as an interior with multiple histories, has too-long held its audiences in social bondage without acknowledging their haptic potential. This aligns to Jon McKenzie's notion of 'Global Feeling' as "political love" – an interconnected condition we are both *a part of* and *apart from* in order to transmit effects and affects in unprecedented ways (2008, p.129). Aligning theatre to the hold as a "contrapuntal island" where we are marooned in "stateless emergency" (Harney/Moten, 2013, p.94), what now pops-up in relation to dramatic architecture in-motion?

Conclusion

> *We … have to recognize the wide range of uses for which the container box has been repurposed in different parts of the globe, as it now functions not only as a container for travelling commodities but also, in different contexts, as a form of temporary shelter, of low cost housing, and as one of the 'building blocks' of military encampments, prisons, educational institutions, and large-scale markets across the globe.* (Morley, 2017, p.13)

The hold is a performative space etymologically linked to power, control and detention. It clasps, grasps, grips, clenches, imprisons, locks up and shuts up, influences and dominates. As a hold, the shipping container appears identical on the outside. Yet, as home, hideaway, or even prison, each unit is individualized by its occupants who attempt to establish a unique habitat, as they are held in a limbo of non-belonging, other than to each other through shared kinship, culture and hopes of return or better lives elsewhere. As Shauna Janssen points out in her catalogue essay for *PhoneHome* (2017), by acknowledging the agency of the 'shipped', Moten and Harney's 'Fantasy in the Hold' also renders containerisation a space of critical mobility and political love: "Intensifying the

Figure 4. *Cargo* by Kasia Pol in *The Performance Arcade:* Wellington, New Zealand (2012) www.kasiapol.com/cargo

proximate intimacy of human bodies within it forms a site of shared corporeal vulnerabilities, via a biopolitics of globalisation where the temporality of shipping and the shipped continues to overflow" (Janssen, 2017).

This paper has engaged with the multiple narratives and histories of the shipping container, especially in the time of a worldwide pandemic, which, according to Michael Pooler and Thomas Hale, could signal "an end to the golden era of globalization… a period in which containers have been both the symbol and instrument" (Pooler/Hale, 2020). Through their socio-political associations, concealed haptic potentiality and problematic relationships to power and precarity, they can be understood as much more than neutral building blocks with an industrial aesthetic. So, what does this mean for Vail's proposed *Container Globe*, which is still being investigated while New Zealand's *Pop-Up Globe* (2015), which is principally constructed out of scaffolding, has succeeded in becoming "the world's first touring replica of Shakespeare's theatre" (Gregory, 2020)?

In his Prologue to *Henry V*, William Shakespeare described the *Globe Theatre* as a "wooden O", capable of holding worlds within its timber embrace (1599). Regarding its circular plan as cosmological, Frances Yates also asserts the Globe as a quintessential 'Theatre of the World', operating at microcosmic and macrocosmic levels (1969, p.189). The *Container Globe*'s 'steel O' presents a fitting venue in this age of faltering hyper-globalization, reminding us that Shakespeare himself "lived in the age when all the world's populated continents were first permanently linked by trade" (Bosman, 2010, p.285). However, it is inside the yard, rather than within the stacked shipping container galleries, where fantasy in the venue's hold may lie: as the groundlings haptically negotiate each other's bodies; self-organizing as a microbial organism in constant flux.

Having taken up Boyle's provocation in 'Container Aesthetics' that "any analysis of this infrastructural aesthetic must consider the material effects of transforming shipping containers into art" (2016, p.59), my paper concludes with an image from the 2012 *Performance Arcade*, connecting instead with the *multiple affects* of such transformation. Untethered from the waterfront site, a single rusty shipping container floats on Wellington harbour as if long-lost overboard. Titled *Cargo*, this project by Polish artist, Kasia Pol (Fig. 3), occupies the main event's periphery and spectator's peripheral view. An event in itself, this marooned vessel draws attention to the distant port on the other side of the harbour, which is alive with movement as machines move and stack countless containers enclosing a multiplicity of mysterious contents. As a resistant yet melancholic architectural object – suggesting events of escape, smuggling, entrapment, voyaging and disaster – *Cargo* bobs, sloshes and drifts, responding to the flux of weather and the sea it rides; transforming the city harbour itself into an event-space. Here, in its temporality, mobility and multiple event dimensions, we glimpse 'the new' as proposed by Kwinter in this paper's opening epigraph.

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THE MEMORY OF A DISAPPEARED ARCHITECTURAL TYPOLOGY OF THE POPULAR PERFORMANCE: THE CIRCUS-THEATRES IN SPAIN

JOSEFINA GONZÁLEZ CUBERO
LEONOR DE MEER GONZÁLEZ

Theatre and circus do not need architecture to be produced, but throughout history specific spatial structures have been created for their better development. If Greece first and the Roman Empire later established the models of theatre, amphitheatre and hippodrome-stadium-circus that contained specific shows, they also witnessed the subversion of this architectural independence, because the rest of these buildings had to supply them when they were missing. This was the case in Colonia Clunia Sulpicia, one of the most important cities in northern Roman Hispania, where, lacking an amphitheatre, theatre combined its own activity with animal shows[1].

Throughout history, both the degrees of adaptability of buildings conceived for a specific activity and the definition and fusion of architectural typologies have been exposing the intricate itinerary followed by the architecture. A path already enunciated by the American anthropologist Alfred Louis Kroeber with the analogy of the two trees, one referring to biological evolution and other to cultural evolution, whose difference lies in the permanent separation and the entanglement with union by "tissue-callus" of its branches, respectively.

[1] Discovered in excavations carried out by Miguel Ángel de la Iglesia and Fransec Tuset, directors of the Colonia Clunia Sulpicia archaeological site.

In our opinion, this is the case of the so-called circus-theatres or theatres-circus that explored the intermediate possibilities in the field of architecture and entertainment, the meeting place between the types of man defined by Amiard-Chevrel (1983, p.11): the physical man of action and the psychological man of word.

In the Modern Age and on the periphery of art, the minor and popular forms of the spectacle (circus, fair theatre, variety shows, etc.) progressively acquired a new vitality, with the circus at the forefront. Its valued characteristics were the succession of shows with a different nature and without logical connection, the order motivated by internal needs that ignored the narrative practice linked to the text and the absence of illusionism or the free relationship with the spectators. In addition, these shows achieved a prestige, which they previously had not had, when were read in relation to the artistic expressions of oriental culture, which began to be widely disseminated in the Western world from the 19th century through universal exhibitions.

Both references had special relevance in the art of the 20th century and were also wielded by the currents of theatrical renovation, whose mark was recorded in the architectural proposals and the shows of the avant-garde and post-avant-garde theatre. As for the type of shows, we can mention as examples the "theatre of attractions" by Eisenstein, Arvatov and Tretyakov, the unregulated theatrical practices of the counterculture of the 1960s or Grotowski's paratheatre, among others.

With regard to buildings, the influence of the circus as a circular space in the 20th century was connected with the equality and reciprocity of the interaction between artist and spectator, reproducing the way the crowd spontaneously gathered around an event with a point of equidistant and centripetal view. Likewise, it had something to do with the interaction between spectators who were located in the perimeter stands around the circular ring. Given that the 19th century was the time of panoramas, it was also then when circular or polygonal buildings were dedicated to popular leisure such as circuses, whose spectators

were forced to take a centrifugal look that was translated by the cinematograph into the delocalized virtuality of the screen.

The architectural modernity reabsorbed the circus space in the Great Theatre in Berlin (1919) renovated by Hans Poelzig for the stage director Max Reinhardt, the Endless Theatre (1924) by Frederick Kiesler or the Total Theatre (1927) projected by Walter Gropius for the stage director Erwin Piscator. All these works exemplify this ancestry that later reappeared more as an organization of the spectators than as an architectural form, as in the Théâtre en Rond (1954) in Paris by André Villiers and Paquita Claude as well as the *Theatre in the Round* (1951) by Margo Jones, just to name a few examples.

The proper modern circus was born at the end of the 18th century in England from the equestrian art parades (1678) organized by the excellent rider Philip Astley at his Halfpenny Hatch riding school in Lambeth, where he taught in the morning and performed these shows in the afternoon during the summer. In order that the horses could be better observed, they ran in a circle within a rough enclosure, without a roof and near the indoor arena for their training, which had not been inspired by any circular historical building. In addition, the demonstrations had to become a massive spectacle to sustain themselves economically as a business activity with the sale of tickets.

However, the circus was not truly produced as a show in solidarity with space until Astley put together equestrian demonstrations with acrobatics and pantomimes (1770) and he covered his Amphitheatre Riding House (1779) with a wood and cloth roof, located at the intersection of Stangate Street and Westminster Bridge Road. But, unfortunately, the Royal Circus, Equestrian and Philharmonic Academy (1782) of its close competitor Charles Hughes preceded the Royal Grove (1783) of Astley in defining the kind of permanently covered circus-theatres.

Therefore, the equivalent presence of shows of an equestrian nature and the additions induced the transition from the domain of the outdoor riding arena, sometimes with a stage, to a covered construction, equipped with a stage box

and preceded in front of the proscenium by a circus ring, a circular element that Astley incorporated despite he had not invented it. The success of his exhibitions in France allowed him to build several circus-theatres in Paris, starting with the Nouvel Amphithéâtre or Amphithéâtre Anglais (1783), located at 16 and 18 in the Rue du Faubourg-du-Temple inside urban block, which had similar replicas by other companies.

The varieties were included in the stage box, while the circus offered its performances in the circular ring already consolidated as a symbol, so that the particular needs of both types of shows were satisfied in the appropriate place, but not limited exclusively to them. The performances were developed in each space for the frontal and directional vision of stage box of Italian theatre and for the vision of the vertical dimension in the circus space.

The two performance spaces, the stage box and the circular track, were encompassed within a more or less conical roof or dome for stable circus-theatres or cloth tent for traveling circus-theatres, which are not the object of study in this communication. Both spaces were usually combined to be used together at the same time due to their origin, even if they could also serve only as a theatre or as a circus for certain events. In the case of being used as a theatre, spectators could be placed in the same circus ring as an audience.

Astley's exhibitions in France reinforced the Gallic circus tradition that had its splendor with permanent free-standing circuses. These were built in major cities with a constant programming, while in medium-sized ones it was more common to find circus-theatres. The influence of circus-theatres affected circuses, which assumed their heterogeneity, sometimes installing stages inside them to diversify their performances.

Hybridization characterized the circus-theatres that began to emerge in Europe at the end of the 18th century, which reached their golden age in the last quarter of the 19th century and disappeared at the beginning of the 20th century. Because of their strength and versatility, they competed with the stable European Italian theatres and plunged them into serious crisis, although eventually all of them

were colonized by the cinematograph.

In Spain, circus-theatres also proliferated all over its geography. Matabosch approached the first overall approximation, counting sixty buildings (Matabosch Giménez, 2009), but it is necessary to continue in this direction and investigate them in greater depth and breadth. This is one of the objectives of the research project *OEE CARTOTEA, Observatory of Scenic Spaces: Theater Cartography: Spain*, led by Antoni Ramón Graells, UPC - and developed by the first author of this paper.

In the first place, all projects and buildings have been located geographically in the national territory and by temporal layers. Those with the double denomination of theatre-circus or circus-theatre have been included, as well as those only named with one term despite accommodating both activities, getting a result of around a hundred items.

Only five examples of circus-theatres have survived nowadays. Among them, El Algar, Orihuela, Murcia and Santa Cruz de La Palma partially maintain their original use since they are dedicated solely to theatre. Just one, the Albacete circus-theatre, retains the capacity to host proscenium and circus ring shows.

Their respective restorations, undertaken between the end of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st century, have made it possible to deepen their knowledge. However, there is still much to be done to put them in relation to those that have disappeared or not built and value them as a whole as heritage of memory in their just measure.

Considering their origin as a popular spectacle in cities with a certain number of populations, Spanish circus-theatres were stable or permanent buildings, in some cases of seasonal use and changing location within the same city. Like their international contemporaries, they were theatres and circuses in unison, that is, multifunctional and typologically hybrid buildings. Most of them had a circular or polygonal circus space, but not exclusively, and were characterized by an irregular constructive quality.

For their research, a database has been developed with their characteristics and

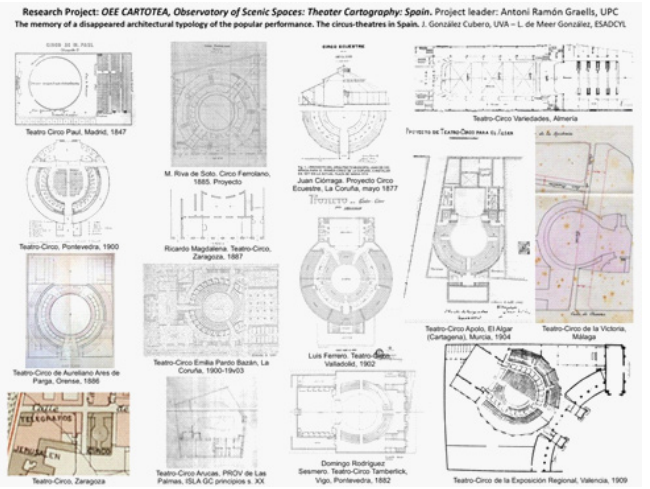

Figure 1. Circus-theatres in Spain. Plans. Authors' compilation

the existing graphic and photographic information that serves as a substrate for the comparative typological study in progress (Figure 1).

Previous research on the life of circus-theatres in Spain has been carried out fragmentarily and in an amateur way by lovers of the place who collected lived memories. Recently, academic research has resulted in a doctoral thesis (Tidor López, 2016), whose second chapter expands the inventory of circus-theatres and studies them in chronological-geographical order from a historiographic point of view. However, there is not yet a monographic and panoramic study dedicated to them (Figure 2).

As mentioned, it is also convenient to recover the memory of the disappeared or the unbuilt through their research, because they attest to a theatrical culture of past times and help to understand more deeply the typological renovation that occurred in modern theatre architecture on an international scale.

Other proposals and previous constructions are put in relation to the circus-

Figure 2. Circus-theatres in Spain. Interiors. Authors' compilation

theatres. From the high architectural culture, such as the circus projects of Étienne-Louis Boullée, to the national bullfighting tradition, such as the "plazas de toros" (bull rings).

The research has not forgotten to address the ramifications towards other shows that were carried out in circular and/or central constructions, like the "galleras" (coops) or "reñideros" (pits) for cockfighting[2]. Although small in size, they present certain constants that approximate them to circuses, in fact, this name is also used to designate them.

Conclusions

The circus-theatres were temporary or permanent buildings, with an uneven constructive quality that were consolidated, at the same time as the panoramas,

[2] Currently, cockfighting is only allowed in Andalusia and the Canary Islands under strict conditions.

as constructions dedicated to leisure and popular para-theatrical shows. Whereas they were not an object of interest for high architectural culture, they had a great impact in popular culture, a fountain in which the Fine Arts drank and those others that advocated the renewal of the scene too.

The memory of the circus-theatres has been recovered by historiography, but it is still pending to be recovered by architecture in Spain. Although the vast majority of them have disappeared, they all constitute, together with the bourgeois Italian theatres, the heritage of the theatre life of cities, which has left its mark on urban areas in different ways. For this reason and because they were hybrid architectural examples, born purely from a functional necessity, it is essential to consider them not only as a legacy that occurred in parallel to the official theatrical architecture, reported by historiography, but as a fundamental part of it and of current performing arts.

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WORD AND FLESH: FRAMING THE SPACE IN THEATRICAL PERFORMANCES IN CHURCHES

BRIDGET FOREMAN

In a village in the Yorkshire Dales, in the rural North of England, an elderly woman enters the church. She is greeted at the door and makes her way to her regular seat among a gathering of people, many of whom she has known for years. A man steps up to the lectern and begins to deliver a eulogy to Nathaniel, a farmer who has died suddenly in middle age. The church building fills and echoes to the sound of the speaker's words as he shares memories of Nathaniel with his listeners, who sit, silently attentive. When he finishes speaking, lights come up behind him on the cramped interior of a cottage, framed in the wider space of the church. There is a pile of laundry, a table and chairs, an exit upstage. Because this is not, in fact, a funeral, but the performance of a play. The congregation is also an audience, the elderly woman is both a worshipper and a spectator, the site is at once a church and a performance space.

This paper will expand upon the complexities implied by this convergence of event, meaning, site, space – all somewhat slippery terms – considering further the relationship between space and text, from the perspective of the playwright. *Simeon's Watch* was commissioned from me as a writer in 2016. The play tells the story of a contemporary family facing the experience of dementia, but it also draws on the biblical story of Simeon, who appears in Luke's gospel as a

man to whom it has been prophesied that he will not die until he has seen his salvation – that is, the Christ child. *Simeon's Watch* presents three generations of sheep-farmers: Simeon, who at the start of the play is beginning to exhibit signs of dementia, his daughter, Leah, and grand-daughter, Rina. As the family wrestles with the challenges and change presented by Simeon's illness, he moves towards apparently increasing inaccessibility and death. However, the horizon of the piece offers an alternative perspective of hope and a re-consideration of the ways in which relationships and communication can be preserved for people experiencing dementia, and their loved ones. It toured in the run-up to Christmas, playing for single performances in community venues, which were usually churches in rural areas. While this was in part determined by the modus operandi of the commissioning theatre company, there was also a dramatic, artistic requirement for the play to sit comfortably within those performance spaces, and to speak into the vernacular of the site-generic locations. The commission demanded a piece that could speak the languages, codes and signifiers of both theatre and church, and enable the audience to receive the play bilingually. This was in part a challenge to the visual and material aspects of production, design and direction, but it also presented a juxtaposition that needed to be expressed within the script.

The debate around space and place in theatre is lively and populated with divergent terminology. The proposition in Peter Brook's seminal work that there could be such a thing as an "empty space" (Brook, 1969) has been argued over and refuted, for example by Chris Goode, who aligns himself with John Cage's assertion that "there is no such thing as an empty space or an empty time" (Cage in Goode, 2015, Ch.1). Brook himself develops his earlier argument by acknowledging that his quest to discover an "empty" space in which to make theatre was a reaction against making and seeing work that "has always been within a context. The context is either geographical, cultural or linguistic, so that we work within a system" (Brook in Goode). Goode contends that Brook's response in the "staking out of an empty space" may be "blandly attractive",

but "there is something terrible going on: because nobody lives there" (Goode). This is an instructive debate in the consideration of understanding how the interaction between a piece of performance and the physical space in which it is performed can result in thick and complex layering of meanings. When a piece of theatre not only sits within a site but accrues that site's significance, it can engage the audience in an effective and affective conversation. Goode has indicated that "the experience of an audience may have much to do with the idea of a particular 'place', especially one they know" (Goode). He goes on to reflect on the nature and character of churches as representing a "space that, viewed secularly in formal terms at least, could serve simply as a site for community gathering, the circulating of information, the celebratory enaction of lives shared". However, he concludes that "their meaning is defined in practice not by their appointed custodians but by their users, and not in abstraction but in the enaction of… that useage" (Goode). If we view this in Brook's terms, we can conclude that a church presents a context, and represents a system.

Expanded Scenography and Site-Generic Performance

While Cathy Turner bemoans the fact that "architecture is often considered as though we can separate the meaning of buildings from their habitation" (Turner, 2015, p.2), subsequent commentaries have addressed this blind spot though a discussion of expanded scenography arising from the increasing use and understanding of found space as sites for performance. McKinney and Palmer propose that "expanded scenography utilizes space not simply as a backdrop but as an active part of the process of inviting spectators to situate themselves with regard to their lived experience" (McKinney & Palmer, 2017, p.1). The lived experience of a church member in relation to their church building manifests itself culturally, socially, spiritually and practically. It is a space that has been architecturally conceived, but it is also a place of meeting, of worship, of community, and of multiple functions. In addition to their structural and symbolic architecture, churches are cluttered with the rather more prosaic

paraphernalia of functionality: heaters and speakers, microphones, stacks of additional chairs, hand-crafted banners, flower arrangements; a visually chaotic story of the life lived within the space.

In this context, the notion of expanded scenography as one that, in McKinney and Palmer's terms, shapes "the interface between the performance and the audiences" (McKinney & Palmer, 2017, p.6), creating "a mode of encounter and exchange… between bodies, objects and environments" (McKinney & Palmer, p.2) becomes tangible, and presents us with three spaces, which I will discuss: the physical space, the conceptual space and the congregational space.

The Physical Space

McKinney and Palmer's observation that "There is an inherent notion of performance and event in architecture" (McKinney & Palmer, 2017, p.10) is readily apparent in the physical space of churches, that provides the setting for rites, rituals and gatherings that are not in themselves theatre but are rich in theatricality. This is the case regardless of the vastly differing styles, ages and sizes of many church buildings: they share a common purpose, meaning that in addition to their conceptual affiliation with performance, churches also – in their physical architecture – provide many of the material conditions for performance events where an audience will observe an action of some sort. But it does not follow that churches are therefore appropriate spaces for the staging of almost any form of theatrical performance. The architectural and scenographic foundations for a piece of theatre that is performed in a church are the generic and particular canvas against which any theatrical design will be seen, and they demand recognition of the additional layers of perception that will result. Gay McAuley describes space as "crucial to understanding the nature of the performance event and how meanings are constructed and communicated" (McAuley, 1999, p.278). The set for *Simeon's Watch* was compact: a raised platform on which a claustrophobically small domestic setting (opening up to a simple hillside in the second half) provided a focused context

for the performance, but it sat – physically – within the larger space of the church. That larger space, which changed every night of the tour, told its own story and spoke its own physical language: of history, community, iconography and function, and was visible to the audience throughout the performance. Thus the play was presented at every performance within two frames: the outer frame of the church building, the inner frame of the theatrical setting. In performance, this allowed the audience's experience to take the form of Linda Hutcheon and Siobhan O'Flynn's *'oscillation'* between different modes of engagement and levels of immersion (Hutcheon & O'Flynn, 2013). And the physical relationship between the two frames expressed a psychological expectation: that the play being performed would sit within the cultural, social and spiritual framing with which the audience arrived.

Clifford McLucas characterises this matrix as starting with "the host and the ghost" as an expression of

> *(...) the relationship between place and event. The host site is haunted for a time by a ghost that the theatre-makers create. Like all ghosts it is transparent and the host can be seen through the ghost.* (McLucas in Kaye, 2000, p.168)

In a church, the space is both lived and – by implication – historic: churches exude a connection to the past, some through their antiquity, and their semi-fixed features of memorial tablets, books of remembrance, and so on, and all through the significance of their role as mediating contexts for life rituals such as baptism, marriage and burial, as well as the weekly rite of people gathering together and self-identifying as a community with a sense of its own history. This constitutes an expression of Mike Pearson's "'single stratum': the idea that all we ever see is the present, but that the present is itself infiltrated by relics of the past" (Pearson, 2014), a description that also – in its suggestion that the past can make incursions upon the present – goes to the heart of the experience of dementia that *Simeon's Watch* explores. So the layering, and simultaneous

experience of past and present, and the porosity of the boundary between the two, are expressed as active elements by both the play itself and the site of performance.

The Conceptual Space

In considering the conceptual space represented by a church, the most assertive feature is that a church building is not neutral to performer or spectator: it is designed as a sacred space, and even when other, more secular activities take place within it, they are set against a backdrop that is purposed – and used – for communal acts of worship. At the very least, Pearson's observation that "Religious buildings are freighted with history, with established routines of observance, with atmospheres of piety" (Pearson, 2010, p.64) begins to articulate the particular character of the host. If we consider a church within the framework of Elam's spatial codes (the architectural, interpersonal, scenic and virtual, which combine to define dramatic space – Elam, 1980), the fixed and semi-fixed architectural features of the space itself tell the stories of the Christian faith: altars and crucifixes evoke sacrifice, sanctuaries speak of holiness, architectural grandeur imitates the grandeur of heaven. Wherever a performance of *Simeon's Watch* was performed, these physical features were untouched, so while the scenes of the play were set in a cottage, a pub, or a hillside, the insistently visible, material signifiers of the spiritual function for which the framing church building was purposed remained while the performance was grafted onto it. The significance of this layering extended beyond the visual, however: it provided a lens through which the meaning of the play comes into focus; an implication that the experience of the characters, and the subject of the play, is not distinct or separate from a spiritual understanding of life, but is held within it. Key to the analysis of the power of this effect is the simple fact that it could not have been achieved in any performance site that was not a place of worship. So the church itself represents a further active element within the dynamic of the play's reception; a participator in the collaboration between what Rachel Hann has

described as the "human and non-human agents that render a place as eventful, attentive" (Hann, 2019, p.4).

The Congregational Space

The human agents of that rendering define the congregational space. At performances of *Simeon's Watch*, the audience was usually largely comprised of the congregation of the church that was hosting the performance. As such, they were people who not only knew each other but who shared deep connections and a willingness to engage emotionally with one another. Additionally, this audience brought a web of expectations that embraced the theatrical, cultural and spiritual; what Susan Bennett describes as "a horizon of cultural and ideological expectations" (Bennett, 1997, p.98). They came primed with ties of friendship, shared values, faith and community, and from their perspective as spectators, both the familiar space and the relationships between human and non-human elements had the potential to be re-conceived through participation in an act of theatre. As a congregation, familiar with participation in services, their mode of engagement was habitually active rather than passive. As an audience, they comprised a community of interest, co-constructive in the interface between themselves and the performance. In such familiar surroundings, it may become difficult for the congregation member – or spectator – to make a distinction between the communal experience of participation in an act of worship, and that of watching a theatrical performance, meaning that the meeting point of Sarah Grochala's lived space and dramatic space is situated not solely in the non-human physical place of performance, but also in the human experience of the individual spectator. So we can view the audience in this context – both as a body and as individuals – as a form of human architecture; a specific space, with a particular character, within which the performance is situated and experienced, and one that completes McLucas's "trinity that constitutes the work" – of the host, the ghost and "the witness, i.e. the audience" (McLucas in Kaye, 2000, p.128).

Architecture and Dramaturgy

Returning to the concept of two frames, Bennett sees the audience's response as a force that brings the frames together:

> *(...) the outer frame contains all those cultural elements which create and inform the theatrical event. The inner frame contains the dramatic production in a particular playing space. The audience's role is carried out within these two frames and, perhaps most importantly, at their points of intersection. It is the interactive relations between audience and stage, spectator and spectator which… cause the inner and outer frames to converge for the creation of a particular experience.* (Bennett, 1997, p.139)

The language here – of frames, convergence, space and intersection – is structural, suggesting that the entire event might be viewed as a form of architecture, or – as McLucas suggests – a number of architectures that are of "different orders of material, some conceptual, some spatial" (McLucas, c.1993-94). This expansion of the definition of 'architecture' has prompted Cathy Turner to link it to her understanding of dramaturgy as a concept that relates ideas to structure: "In each case, what is being articulated is the relationship of diverse elements in a spatio-temporal structure, at once conceptual, material/sensory and symbolic/mimetic" (Turner, 2009, p.2). As the production of *Simeon's Watch* demonstrates, this relationship of diverse elements can result in a complex and distinctive event, both through the intended design of the piece as a whole – its conceptual and ideological foundations – and through the less clearly-defined details presented by the individual churches where the play was performed. The performance acted as a catalyst for spectators to re-frame their relationship with familiar church buildings, with their own narratives connecting with that of the play, evoking Doreen Massey's description of place as being "unfinished business" that is "woven together out of ongoing stories" (Massey, 2005, p.131).

Space and Text

But this account of the symbiotic relationship between space, performance and audience can be further extrapolated – to consider the relationship between space and text through the genesis and construction of the play itself. From the outset, the commission required a play that was conceived structurally and thematically in response to the spaces of performance. The relationship of audience to site became a key factor within the writing of the play, and these elements in turn defined spaces that the text was written out of and into.

The start of the play demonstrates this, deliberately drawing upon the potency of the intersection between the outer and inner frames, acknowledging that the spectators may – at least in part – identify themselves primarily as a congregation rather than an audience. The opening scene, set in a church, in which Simeon gives the eulogy at his son-in-law's funeral, appears at first to be located within the outer frame of the church space, before drawing the us into the inner domestic frame, where the dramatic action of the play is located. It provides a bridge for the spectator to cross from their own world into the world of the play. In the crossing of that bridge, they are transformed from congregation to audience. In writing of a theatrical performance in a chapel, Pearson suggests that "extant practices suggest a dramaturgical structure, as performance adopts the practicalities of the chapel" (Pearson, 2010, p.63). The opening of *Simeon's Watch* gives spectators a familiar entry point, where they are directly addressed in a church setting – cast by Simeon as the family and friends gathered to mourn Nathaniel. As Simeon's speech ends, and the focus moves to his grand-daughter, the audience is drawn fully into the lives of the play's characters, entering a more fully theatrical dimension, and a world that, while familiar, is distinct from their own.

Considered as a whole, the arc of the play takes on a particular resonance when viewed against its setting in a church. Where – in a different performance context – Simeon's journey through the play might be regarded as a progress towards increasing confusion and death, in a church the space becomes – as Gay

McAuley proposes – "a dynamic player" rather than "simply the background to, or neutral container for, actions" (McAuley, 2006, p.15), with the result that Simeon's departure from the 'real' and domestic world seems to draw him closer to heaven. So while the site-generic setting informed some aspects of the writing at the point of commission, it also created a commentary upon the play at the point of performance, providing an architectural context within which aspects of the play's significance were altered.

Understanding the nature of the particular settings in which the final production would be placed was key to the way in which the story was conceived and framed, giving familiar entry and exit points for the audience and allowing for the wider context to speak into the play's narrative. While the terms of the commission may have focused primarily on the physical and material constraints of production, the act of writing was undertaken with a constant awareness that I was not only conjuring a fictional onstage world, but also managing that world's interface with an offstage one, which existed in a discrete dimension: that of the 'reality' inhabited and experienced by the audience. Goode posits that "staged work that is able to apply itself to the specific conditions of the encounter it initiates will cause its audience to feel that the work is, for once, about them" (Goode, 2015, Ch.1). Enabling the audience to identify with the situations and the characters was part of the reasoning behind the use of direct address in the play, so that spectators felt that they were being spoken to personally. Again, the setting of the play within a church allowed those passages to resonate with familiar forms of direct address deriving from the space. And they implied a relationship with audience members in which each of the characters had their own way of speaking. Simeon addresses them as a congregation; for Leah they are the confidants to whom she reveals her feelings when she visits the church's Knit and Natter group; while Rina casts them as the audience at the Pub's open mic nights, where she develops a stand-up routine in which she reflects on her grandfather's condition. Each of these allots a role to the audience, giving them a stake in the story and allowing them to move between intimacy and distance, identifying and

connecting at different levels. And in articulating different aspects of the space's relationship to individuals, these theatrical devices assert Dorita Hannah's vision of architecture as "a complex and active player in our everyday lives" (Hannah, 2019, p.1). In doing so, however, they also simultaneously confer separate and distinct identities on the space itself, presenting different lenses through which the narrative – and the subject – can be viewed.

Constraint and Creativity

In considering the influence of the physical, conceptual, and congregational spaces upon the artist's response to a commission, my reflections point to the familiar landscape of constraint and creativity that is inhabited so often when making work in non-conventional spaces. Where the acceptance of a single, physical understanding of what an architectural space offers might lead to a setting-specific conclusion (such as a play that is set in a church), the expansion in this case of the notion of space to include the conceptual and congregational transforms an apparent restriction into opportunity. In Patricia Stokes's terminology, what might be perceived as "constraints for conformity" that "hinder novelty" become "constraints for creativity" that act as "barriers that lead to breakthrough" (Stokes, 2005, p.7) in the conceit, creation and production of the work. This effect can also be observed in the physical staging of the play; its scenography and design, as we have seen, offering a dialogue with the framing space of the church.

The conception and writing of *Simeon's Watch* as a piece of site-generic performance might be seen as a model of the way in which the interaction between space and theatre can be transformative to both. It reveals the potentially rich complexities that result when we consider – in Hannah's words – "not what a building is but what it does" (Hannah, 2019, p.1), particularly so when its function is expressed through human activity within and in relationship to its space. This is the "transference" that Hannah identifies as the result of "a mutual relationship between architecture and audience as well as architecture and performance"

(Hannah, p.1). Winding those performance relationships further back into the creative process and timeline in order to include the way in which the creation of text might be informed and even shaped by architectural space offers scholars areas of consideration and of further investigation. For practitioners – writers, directors and commissioners – the potential offered by creating dramatic work in response to and relationship with architecture is a field rich with future possibility.

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OCCUPATION AND TRANSFORMATION OF OLD WAREHOUSES AT RIO DE JANEIRO DOCKLANDS AREA INTO THEATRICAL SPACES. PERFORMATIVE EXPERIENCES IN THE 21st CENTURY

EVELYN FURQUIM WERNECK LIMA

Introduction

The challenge for theatrical groups that are concerned with socially engaged theatre is to pave the way between the impasses of contemporary capitalism through performing artistic activities in alternative spaces in order to ensure the full exercise of citizenship. As a form of resistance and an alternative to the commodification of culture, some theatrical groups and their visionary directors have sought to occupy urban voids in peripheral areas. Some of those groups create their stages on the public spaces, but others prefer vacant structures.

The appropriation of spaces not originally intended to be theatrical spaces opened other possibilities for staging and the option of working at different scales and diverse audiences. Often, large spaces may also be required to achieve the desired effects, as demonstrated in this article, wich is based on the creations of two theatrical companies wishing to reach different classes of spectators, including local populations, union-workers, and public-school students.

A city wich is over 450 years old and former capital of Brazil, Rio de Janeiro presents uncountable properties of cultural value listed as cultural heritage, although unoccupied due to a process of deindustrialization. These urban voids are concentrated in the numerous industrial warehouses still existing near the

historic centre and specially in the old Docklands area, recently undergoing a regeneration project[1].

As other modern cities with a long urban history, Rio de Janeiro Docklands area and its neighborhoods are marked by strong contrasts, with different populations, with distinct lifestyles, which diversity can be defined by economic reasons, corresponding to income or social classes, and social reasons, such as immigration, strong Afro-descendant population, and other causes. The renovation works undertaken for the Olympic Games in 2016, strengthened problems of gentrification and segregation in the region.

Encompassing three districts, this region presents interesting architectures to develop performing arts practices, attracting those directors that no longer want to stage in the traditional proscenium arch theatre.

In the first chapter of her book *Event-Space*, entitled 'Disciplining the bourgeois glory machine', Dorita Hannah demonstrates the exhaustion of the Italianate stage pattern, in which the proscenium arch separates the audience from performers. Throughout the chapter, Hannah defends a more ephemeral theatre architecture, aiming at a dynamic and eventful character. She emphasizes that as performance became visceral, architecture became more disembodied.

For Bernard Tschumi, "architecture is as much about the events that take place in spaces as much as about the spaces themselves". Mentioning the interactions between architecture and performance in the 1970s, in an interview with Hannah e Khan, Tschumi points out that the discourse should be

> *(...) architecture in an expanded sense whereby the movement of bodies in space was just as important as space itself. Hence the definition of architecture as space, movement, and what happens in it, that is, the action or what I later called the 'event'.* (Tschumi *apud* Hannah e Khan, 2008, p.52)

[1] In spite of the construction of a long, tree-lined boulevard and multiple roadworks, there has been no rehabilitation of the numerous empty, unused buildings in the area.

Grounded in this architect's description of event-space, Hannah formulated a new concept of non-representational spaces based on the generative convergence between architectural theory (as the discourse of space) and the performance theory (as the discourse of events). She states that her book aims to establish "a general theory of spatial performativity through the specificity of performance space, insisting that the built environment housing the event is itself an event" (Hannah, 2018, p.xvi-xviii).

The two studies examined in this paper discuss the flexibility of productions that can occur in different alternative spaces. In both cases, the troupes staged plays in industrial structures of historical value, with great repercussions among the spectators. Such structures, in the form of industrial warehouses, are true event-spaces that have brought together diverse and enthusiastic audiences in environments where, in the past, the dockworkers operated. As Marvin Carlson points out, social old spaces are already layered with several associations and memories before they are used for theatrical events (Carlson, 2003) and the two directors who chose the huge and old industrial structures to stage their plays knew how to explore the space as an event.

Through scenography, theatre has always transformed scenic boxes into different spaces, but in contemporary times, space itself has transformed theatre. This paper aims to shed light on the occupation and ephemeral transformation of old industrial warehouses-sheds at Rio de Janeiro docklands area into theatrical spaces, examining two productions: Euclides da Cunha's *Os Sertões* (*The Hinterlands*), a production of the Oficina Group (2007), and Machiavelli's *La Mandragola*, staged by Companhia Ensaio Aberto (2019).

From the Oficina Theatre to a Warehouse: Zé Celso's Event-Space in *Os Sertões* (*The Hinterlands*)

The Oficina Group is a theatre company located in São Paulo, founded in 1958. Throughout its history the Oficina Theatre has existed in three different internal configurations: the first (1961-1966), designed by Joaquim Guedes, had two

seating areas with the stage in the middle, while the second (1967), designed by Flávio Império, had a revolving stage and concrete tiered seats. The third and current configuration, planned and built by architects Lina Bo Bardi and Edson Elito in the 1980s, transformed the building into its current 'street-theatre' configuration (Lima, 2018). In 1993, director José Celso Martinez Correa (known as Zé Celso) re-opened his Oficina Theatre in São Paulo featuring a revolutionary architecture[2].

Since the early 21st century, Zé Celso has developed his approach to stage drama that combines music, poetry recitation, dance, performance, epic theatre, popular game, party and carnival, which he calls 'tragediacomediorgya', revealed in productions such as *Os Sertões* (*The Hinterlands*). It is worth remembering that the Oficina Theatre is currently a space designated to the democratization of culture, adopting a social approach and allowing a huge range of artistic and political manifestations to be spread among all people, no matter what social class they belong to. Architect Lina Bo Bardi's design reused the old structure of the 1920s and created a 'theatre as a street' – with a longitudinal stage that connects the entrance to the backstage of the theatre, taking advantage of a very long, narrow building, whose interior was demolished. Metal parts support the new roofs and mezzanines superimposed on the background of the building. The metal galleries arranged along this walkway/stage, on both sides, have three levels, allowing actors to act as spectators. Besides, the audience can circulate among the machinery, the screens, the musicians and even the director's office, which are visible to the audience, as the architects had designed (Lima, 2018).

But this solution for a linear stage, allowing the audience to participate in the play from the scaffolding galleries or the walkway sides has become so peculiar to the Oficina Group that recently, Zé Celso has put together spaces similar to his Oficina Theatre sited in São Paulo in the different cities where he performed

[2] The Oficina Theatre was recently listed by *The Guardian* newspaper as one of the ten best theatres in the world.

his five plays based upon Euclides da Cunha's most famous epic novel *Os Sertões* (*The Hinterlands*)[3]. One of the cities he moved with those plays was Rio de Janeiro, from 2nd to 14th October 2007. At that occasion, Zé Celso specified,

> *We want to install a structure as close as possible to the original so that people feel that they are at the Oficina Theatre environment. So, we are concerned with suspending the floor in order to create an underground corridor and keep the galleries for aerial scenes.* (Corrêa, 2012, *online*)

To perform Euclides da Cunha's *Os Sertões* in Rio de Janeiro, Zé Celso chose the oldest storage building of the Docklands area in Rio de Janeiro[4]. On purpose or not, the chosen warehouse is very close to Morro da Providência (Providencia Hill), where the first carioca slum was settled, when soldiers returning from the Canudos War, the main issue of the play, established themselves[5].

The building keeps historical and ethnographic values, for the importance of the Brazilian identity memory, as a symbol of a struggle for equity of rights and opportunities for the black population, still in slavery when it was built in 1871. Besides, it was designed by black engineer André Rebouças, who built the construction without the use of slave labor[6]. Its unique dimension and architectural structure consist of approximately 14.000 m2 distributed among two very high floors and the internal space features 168 meters of extension and

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[3] José Celso Martinez Corrêa dramatized the novel *Os Sertões* (*The Hinterlands*) by Euclides da Cunha. The book is divided into three parts: "The Earth", "The Man" and "The Struggle", which, in the Oficina Theatre, were unfolded in five: Earth (The Shell Award 2005), The Man I; The Man II, The Struggle I and II.

[4] This relevant industrial heritage was listed by the IPHAN - The National Historic and Artistic Heritage Institute in 2016. The Galpão Docas Pedro II is the oldest in the Docklands area and is adjacent to the old *Cais do Valongo*, an ancient wharf where enslaved Africans landed in Rio de Janeiro for more than a century, so there is a strong relationship of belonging between the shed and the residents, mostly Afro-descendants.

[5] Like other Oficina Theatre's productions, *Os Sertões* is another chapter of the group's struggle for many decades against a business group that plans to build a huge shopping center and skyscrapers suffocating the listed and historical theatre. It is the ancient struggle between culture and savage capitalism.

[6] Slavery in Brazil was only extinguished in May 1888.

36 meters wide.

The ritualistic, dithyrambic features of this production have been perfectly adapted to the basilica shape of the building, which, such as a Paleo-Christian church, presents a very large and high central nave and two shorter lateral aisles, divided on two floors. The use of this old non-theatrical space to exhibit a play that has been performed during 26 hours in five days attests how architecture can interfere with dramaturgical meaning. The hard seats, arranged along the lateral aisles, suggest that the audience attend the theatre, not for comfort, but to stimulate thought and imagination.

Throughout the play, images of actors and audience were recorded in real time and projected on a large screen and interacted with a live musical band. No boundaries have been established between audience and stage. Sometimes the actors came up to the stands and spectators descended and came into the scenic area, fraternizing with the actors (Lima, 2017). Such 'found space' corresponds exactly to the concept of an architecture which is not limited to its dimensions and aesthetics but absorbs the dimensions of the bodies of the people who use it, as suggested by Andrew Filmer (2006, p.24).

How did the architecture of the deactivated warehouse contribute to the dramaturgy? Why do I consider this production to be a real proposal for a performance in motion?

In seeking to understand the nature of the *sertanejo* man who bravely resisted during the Canudos War, the writer Euclides da Cunha reviews the formation of Brazilian society, its indigenous origin and its beliefs in the masterful work *Os Sertões*. (Cunha, 2012 [1902]). Zé Celso's adaptation is an anthropophagic production and in constant transformation, understanding the anthropophagy introduced by Oswald de Andrade as the fight against the violence applied by the colonizer when imposing an imported culture, enslaving and killing the

Figure 1. Zé Celso himself acts as the main character of the Canudos War, the religious leader Antonio Conselheiro, as a Nietzschean "Zarathustra", surprising all performers and audience together. 2007. Courtesy of Teatro Oficina

natives[7] (Andrade, 1928).

In the episode *The Man I*, he shows the European colonizer copulating with the slaves since they entered the ships in Africa, originating the typical Brazilian man, a result of miscegenation. In Zé Celso and the team of Teatro Oficina's viewpoint, it is the story of the Brazilian Man from colonial times up to the Canudos War when the Nietzschean "Zarathustra"[8] appeared in the Northeastern "sertão": the leading character of Antônio Conselheiro represented

[7] Oswald de Carvalho was a Brazilian modernist scholar who wrote 'The Manifesto Antropófago' published in *Revista de Antropofagia*, No. 1, May 1928. This manifesto proposes the de-catechization of the Brazilian people, intending to "devour" culture and religion imposed on Brazil by the colonizer, proposing to "swallow" the European cultural legacy and "digest" it in the form of typically Brazilian art.
[8] For Nietzsche, Zarathustra was a "dionysiac monster". In *O Nascimento da Tragédia*, 1992, p, 27. (*Birth of Tragedy*).

Figure 2. One can notice the magic of the literature transformation into a sung spectacle, fully shared with the audience that occupies the steep bleachers installed on the side wings of the shed or standing along the central lane. 2007. Courtesy of Teatro Oficina

by Zé Celso himself, in his mature age[9]. Reflecting on the episodes of the civil war that took place in Canudos at the end of the 19th century, the production of *Os Sertões* is also a great poetic libel in favor of the struggle for the construction of the Stadium Theatre already conceived in the project by Lina Bo Bardi and Edson Elito in the years 1980. The proposal to expand the space for a Stadium Theatre, in the "Greek-tropical" way, according to José Celso Martinez Corrêa, was inspired by Andrade's *Manifesto Antropófago* by (1928)[10].

In addition to believing in the power of art in social intervention through the cult of Dionysus, also defended by Nietzsche (1992 [1872]), in the Brazilian

[9] Antônio Conselheiro was a Brazilian religious leader who assumed a messianic dimension by leading the Arraial de Canudos, a small settlement in the hinterland of Bahia that attracted thousands of countrymen, among peasants, Indians, and newly freed slaves. The Republican Army destroyed the settlement in the so-called Canudos War in 1896. Both the Catholic Church and the wealthy colonels in the region abhorred Conselheiro.

[10] See note 7.

Figure 3. The magnitude of the spectacle in constant movement transforms the shed into an event-space with actors and audience moving from the street to the interior of the huge warehouse. Courtesy of Teatro Oficina

solid relationship between politics and anthropophagy, Zé Celso is also inspired by the eschatological proposals of Antonin Artaud (1958 [1937]). As one can observe in *Os Sertões* the strong Artaudian influence is reflected in what the body has most relevant, including in many scenes, the naked body. When telling the story through songs and lyrics, the group is inspired by the Greek choir and the Nietzschean notion that Dionysius' creative and impetuous force comes from music. By transposing this powerful literary work to the theatre, Zé Celso generated a theatrical language that he called *Carnival Opera*. But the most amazing is that he transformed the play into a real fight, making a metaphor between the Canudos War and the Teatro Oficina fight against a well-known businessman, which has been carried on for more than 30 years[11].

[11] All the information can be confirmed in letters and manifestoes available in http://teatroficina.com.br/uzyna-uzona/Acessed Dec. 2019.

The very configuration that Zé Celso created inside the historic shed, with a central nave resembling a true temple, highlighted the ritualistic aspect of the Canudos War heroes'saga, which the director himself had already staged at the Oficina Theatre and in so many "found places" in several Brazilian cities, always in unusual spaces that left a strong mark on the history of Brazilian theatre in contemporary times, emphasizing how non-purposed built architecture can contribute to dramaturgy.

Machiavelli's *La Mandragola*: a Companhia Ensaio Aberto Production at the Armazém da Utopia

While in Zé Celso's production of *Os Sertões* at Docas D. Pedro II Warehouse Nietzsche's philosophical theories and Artaud's proposals for the Theatre of Cruelty emerge, in Luiz Fernando Lobo's production of *La Mandragola* at Armazém da Utopia it is Brecht's epic theatre that inspires the performance.

Directed by Luiz Fernando Lobo since 1992, the Companhia Ensaio Aberto is a theatre group located in Rio de Janeiro that performs a relevant cultural and social work to the city because of the social and transforming nature of its productions.

Focusing on the Brazilian political and economic reality, the group attracts an audience not habitually used to attend plays. Alongside intellectuals and habitual theatregoers, trade unionists and students always come to join the productions staged by the group, developing a politicized and critical view to discuss Brazilian people's reality. Grounded in Brechtian theories, the company established a new stage-audience relationship and abandoned the Italianate illusionist stage to foster recognition of the masses' transformative power.

Besides, to reach a larger audience, the company staged its first productions outside the purposed theatrical building and held open roundtables and lectures to discuss dramaturgy and social issues concerning authors and plays. The group's first production, *O Cemitério dos Vivos* (*The Cemetery of Living People*), was staged at the UFRJ – The Federal University of Rio de Janeiro old building,

which was a former hospice in which Lima Barreto, author of the original novel, had been a patient. Another production, called *The Mission*, was staged at the Imperial Palace, in the city centre, *'to give greater access to the population working in downtown and to those who live on the outskirts of the city*', as stated by Luiz Fernando Lobo (2019). Those choices for staging in unusual places of the city already prove the mobility of the company's productions.

To implement its international reference project, after years of struggle and resistance, the company occupied in 2016 Warehouse-Shed n.6 and its annex belonging to the Rio de Janeiro Dock Company (CDRJ) and named it *Armazém da Utopia* (Utopia Warehouse)[12]. This industrial structure is currently the headquarters of the Companhia Ensaio Aberto, although the troupe constantly changes the different spaces within the huge shed to stage their productions.

In this paper I analyse Machiavelli's popular comedy *La Mandragola*, which premiered on October 26, 2019, at the *Armazém da Utopia* with a free season, open to the general public, schools, and unions workers. As the scholar of modern political thought, Machiavelli emphasizes in his text the contradictions between public and private, the play was staged in a sole setting, featuring a public square in Florence, that is, no scene is private because everything happens on the street.

To house the *piazza* where the Renaissance comedy takes place, director Luiz Fernando Lobo built, inside the vacant warehouse-shed, specifically in its annex, a rough arena in a recessed rectangular space, surrounded by rustic wood bleachers, with three large tables and staircases as a *piazza*.

As the Companhia Ensaio Aberto's staging departs from the tradition of improvised stages and orality, a troupe of minstrels and jokers are always on the scene, as 'the people'. Reassuring the popular theatre tradition, the company is inspired by the Brechtian theatre, the epic theatre before Brecht, the fair theatre,

[12] The industrial structure stands out for its contrast between the massive masonry of exposed brick and the slenderness of the iron pillars. As the area is very extensive, the Company's productions often move within the huge shed.

and, especially, by the narrative aspect of the production. On stage, the troupe, the devices and scenic lighting are also narrative. The company's director and creator, Luiz Fernando Lobo, refers to the design of the production,

> *It is the people in action. The people as a historical agent. The popular scene, from the story, told by the people. The people, as in Peter Burke's concept, who had no sense of individuality: the individual dispersed into the community. Or Bakhtin's concept of people: a popular, collective and genuine body.* (Lobo, 2019, online)

The architect and set designer José Carlos Serroni knew how to explore the environment shaped by the industrial architecture of the shed in apparent brick and the effects of scenic lighting contributed to the atmosphere of the play, in which everything is shared by the spectator who participates intensively in the performance. The three transitional squares – actually very huge tables – denote the argument of the preponderance of the collective, since the work in chorus is fundamental for the epic theatre, so the whole troupe sings and dances at the lower level in relation to the *improvised stages*, putting in evidence the social subjects circulating in a Renaissance piazza in Florence. The wood – predominant in the scenography – refers to the platforms of *Comedia dell' Arte* and open up in different possibilities of relation and composition in the geometry of the space.

The location of the performance inside the old warehouse, the dynamism of the construction of the three improvised stages, the many stairs, and the performed sketches' fragmentation make the audience experiment the place as an 'event-space' emphasized by the scenic lighting creating silhouettes of unnaturalized bodies, not realistic, but articulated and grotesque bodies.

> *Everything is shown as a game, not as a representation (...). The ceiling over the stage opens and closes in front of the spectator, revealing all the warp –*

Figure 4. *La Mandragola* illuminated setting (2019). The arrangement for the stage includes three large tables and staircases on which performers go up and down, also involving the audience. It followed an impromptu scheme denoting a moving space with different levels and enabling the participation of the audience sitting on rustic benches as if they were at the Renaissance square. 2019. Courtesy of Agnes de Freitas

> *the poles, the reflectors, their mechanism – through pulleys handled by the performers in front of the audience: magic and technique in a dialectical relationship.* (Gadiolli, 2019, interview)

Referring to changes in understanding of *site-specific* in recent decades, Jorge Palinhos points out in his paper 'Space and Performance – Researching place and gesture in real settings', that space can be turned into metaphor *'for something considered more important, like a political or social issue*' (Palinhos, 2014, p.3). I believe that metaphor happened when Lobo wanted to emphasize the public space where all the classes can live together as Machiavelli highlights in his dramaturgy[13]. The audience around the *piazza* was similarly composed

[13] I could notice that, in addition to literary aesthetics, the production reveals the social and political conditions at the beginning of the Renaissance, in special in the public space, allowing analogies connecting the Machiavelli's play (*La Mandragola*) and his political treatise (*Il Principe*).

Figure 5. *La Mandragola* – At the end of the presentation, all the performers went up the improvised stages in a colourful and unusual movement with active audience participation. On the central stage stands director Luiz Fernando Lobo, who acted as the character of Messer Nicia, a symbol of the new rising bourgeoisie in the Florence of the Médicis, next to the characters of Calimaco, Lucrecia and Friar Timothy. 2019. Courtesy of Diego Padilha

of different classes, as it was a free entrance performance in a low-income neighborhood. Besides, it was so integrated to the performers that spectators acted as true citizens of Renaissance Florence sitting or standing around the *piazza*.

This creation had certainly a social and political approach and denoted a profound criticism of the class divisions within Rio de Janeiro society through Machiavelli's play. However, what I consider most meaningful is that this production is a sensible proposition for performance in motion, a genuine *event-space* in the docklands area.

Conclusion

Recent developments on the relation between non-theatrical spaces used for performance and theatre are this paper's main argument through the two case

studies. The question of eliminating illusionism and putting it into a discussion – with intense participation by spectators – the economic contradictions, social dramas, and oppressions of typical class-structured society exists since the modern theatre proposed by Bertolt Brecht, still staged in Italianate theatres. Nevertheless, in contemporary times other spaces in the city have taken on a fundamental role in ensuring stage-audience interrelation and the enjoyment of the relationship between bodies and built place.

It is a fact that unusual theatrical spaces begin to emerge in the Dockland area near Rio's historic centre, and that those warehouses – full of meanings and history of the Afro-descendant population and immigrants who had worked in the port area until the 1970s – can foster theatre and performance to an extensive audience.

The first production analysed in the former Galpão Docas Pedro II sought to maintain the poetic and Nietzschean relationship that exists in the physical structure of the Oficina Theatre itself, by staging the play along the central nave of the warehouse, which also functioned as a "street-theatre". Due to the immense dimensions of the abandoned structure, the found space made it possible to reaffirm Zé Celso's struggle and desire to make a theatre for the crowds, just as he wishes to implement in the future the Stadium Theatre adjacent to the Oficina Theatre. Created from collective experiments, songs, public participation in open rehearsals and reading the work of Euclides da Cunha, the production transformed the fixed architecture of the dockland warehouse into a true *event-space*.

On the other hand, the production of *La Mandragola* set up in one of the many possible locations of *Armazém da Utopia* can also be considered an 'event-space' by creating a true Renaissance *piazza* where performers enter and leave, singing and dancing, in an original re-adaptation of the Machiavelli's play.

Therefore, I argue that both productions inside old deactivated warehouses reflect the idea of 'event-space' sustained by Hannah since they occupied ephemeral and moving unusual spaces, true dramaturgy in motion. In both productions,

spectators and performers were bodies in movement, unusual events in total harmony with the 'found spaces'. Those warehouses became *performance sites* enjoyed by numerous and heterogeneous audiences in an old and low-income area.

This paper attests that performing arts have moved from the traditional theatre building and transformed different spaces into eventual places to attend productions. This shift enables new experiences for the already interested audiences, but also attracts new different social classes to this theatre in motion.

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THE KINSHIPS OF TOMORROW: NEW FORMS OF RADICAL TOGETHERNESS IN AUDIENCE-PARTICIPATORY DANCE THEATRE

STEFAN JOVANOVIĆ

Embodiment as knowledge production

Modernity has produced an unwavering faith in progress, defined through rational, technological and scientific methods. This progress stands on the graveyards of multiple alternative epistemologies of knowing the world and knowing ourselves. Can we imagine a tomorrow that is based on feeling, therefore being; rather than Descartes' *knowing, therefore being?* (Descartes, 2003). As Somatic Experiencing® founder & trauma-therapist Peter Levine writes:

> *Most people, if asked the question, "How do you know that you're alive?" would speculate with something like, "Well, because..." But that just isn't the answer, it can't be. The way we know we're alive is rooted in our capacity to feel, to our depths, the physical reality of aliveness embedded within our bodily sensations-through direct experience. This, in short, is embodiment.* (Levine, 2010, pp.286-287)

In relation to the dichotomous construction of the rational over other ways (such as feeling) of knowing the world, architecture too is one of the products of this epistemic loss, and remains complicit. So, a question becomes, how can

Figure 1. *Constellations*, directed by the author, the show opens with the audience being invited to waltz by a cast of seven archetypal characters. This image features performer Sara Ruddock with a member of the audience, photographed by Camilla Greenwell and presented at Sadler's Wells Theatre, June 2019, London, UK

architecture integrate models from disciplines like dance, somatic therapy, and theatre, to make spaces for alternative orientations to the world and to cultural production? This paper explores how the combination of sensing into the history of existing spaces and the method of generating social choreographies proposes a new way of creating dance and theatre; one that gives priority to affect, empathy and resonance.

The contemporary dance scene in the United Kingdom is made up of makers working at the edges of critical dance practices that explore questions around what an audience is, is asked to do, and what a performance is and can do. In *Spirit Compass* (2019), choreographed by Lucy Suggate, audiences are invited to dive into deep existential reflection over three 45-minute drumming meditations, watching performers "slip through the cracks and re-integrate, repurpose and reorganise in order to be more-than-human" (Suggate, 2019). In their work *Slug Horizons*, Florence Peake and Eve Stainton explore "the expressive potentialities

of queer bodies through intimacy, touch and collective reclaiming. Promoting an emotional landscape of bravery in response to restrictive attitudes to the sensual and visceral body, *Slug Horizons* elevates the marginalized affection, sexuality, power and energies within non-normative relationships" (Peake & Stainton, 2018).

All three of these artists, and their respective works create unique proposals towards how a space of encounters, oftentimes within a museum or gallery, can be used and re-purposed towards the needs of the collective experience. As choreographer Mette Edvardsen writes:

> *I think dance is not primarily a visual art form. It is also about other senses, and how the senses are working together. Seeing, listening, feeling, but also remembering, imagining and thinking. I think of choreography as writing, which doesn't mean that it needs to be language, but also not an opposite to language, and maybe not as visual.* (Edvardsen, 2017, p.217)

I have often wondered about the ways in which architectural and choreographic methodologies may overlap in a meaningful way; beyond the trends of creating representations of ritual in visual arts spaces. Show after show, I observe that our current relationship to technology is, perhaps paradoxically, moving in step with a need for sensation, for empathy, for resonance, and so the notion of ritual as artistic practice is emerging with every curatorial turn[1]. In this instance, Peter Levine's work acts as an interface linking these needs to bodily experience:

> *As social creatures, it is through empathy that we make our deepest communications. To do this we must be able to 'resonate' with the sensations and emotions of others; we must, in other words, be able to feel the same things*

[1] See for example Sarah Shin's talk 'The Ritual Turn from Tarot to Tantra' at Tate Modern (January 2020), and her co-curation of 'Tender Intervals' at the ICA (February 2020).

> *as those around us feel. The way we indicate this is primarily nonverbal; it is through our postures and expressive emotions.* (Levine, 2010, p.42)

In my practice, the purpose of architecture and the performing arts is to craft experiences within spaces where guests can participate with empathic resonance towards history and towards each other.
As a choreographer and architect, I prompt you with the following question: what can our disciplines do to bring audiences closer to more tangible experiences of connecting to their ancestry, of connecting to belief systems that are different to their own, of creating meaningful relationships with strangers, and with the unknown? I would like to accompany you through the reflection and description of the key milestones of my latest research project, *Radical Togetherness* (2017-18), and the dance-theatre show that emerged out of it, *Constellations* (2019), in which I explore these questions and concerns.

The contracts of consent in being radically together

In 2016 I joined choreographer Meg Stuart in a series of interventions in the city of Vienna during the ImpulsTanz International Dance Festival. Churches, hospitals, museums and public swimming pools became sites of improvisational encounters responding to the choreographer's brief of practicing "love (as) the agreement". Museums quickly became hostile environments, policed by security guards scared that century-old artwork would get damaged, whilst churches turned a blind eye towards what could have easily been read as ritualistic practice. Once the director of the Kunsthistorischen Museum Wien learnt that acclaimed choreographer Meg Stuart was in the museum's jurisdiction, performing a guerrilla-choreographic-intervention, an invitation was immediately made for us to come back the following day, to do it all again. Refusing the invitation, Stuart prompted us with the question "What is radical togetherness?".
This is how *Radical Togetherness* was born, a series of London-based interventions bringing diverse artists into unconventional performance spaces, questioning

which artistic practices are allowed within non-theatrical institutional spaces? Based on the research in Vienna the previous year, I recognized that churches and museums sat on opposite ends of a spectrum between freedom and censorship, respectively. The model I based my method and research on was a body of work called *Crash Landings*, which Meg Stuart and her collaborators produced between 1996 and 1999:

> *Three choreographers, Meg Stuart, Christine De Smedt and David Hernandez, joined forces and visions to devise an interdisciplinary improvisation performance series that became perhaps the most daunting and definitely biggest improvisation series in the still recent history of European contemporary dance. Interdisciplinary in nature, this collaborative project entailed in total the participation of 80 artists who came from disciplines as diverse as dance, music, performance, theatre, scenography, industrial design, visual art, light design, costume and writing.* (Imschoot, 2009, p.104)

My first action was to make an open call to professional performers, artists, and students[2] at the Architectural Association wanting to take part in a series of experimental and unannounced choreographic interventions in the Turbine Hall (Tate Modern), Curve Gallery (Barbican), and The Store (180 Strand). I invited the participants to use the artworks on display, ranging from film to multi-media installations, as inspirational starting points for creating non-violent improvisational interventions. It soon transpired that the perceived *otherness* of these sessions was either an intrusion and we were asked to stop, taking away

[2] During the Research & Development phase of *Radical Togetherness*, the following dance artists, choreographers, and performers were invited to partake: Roni Katz, Alice Heyward, Jen Rosenblit, Nassia Fourtouni, Cécile Tonizzo, Lynda Rahal, Katharina Hölzl, Robert Malmborg, Emma Zangs, Eva Recacha, Siobhan Ni Dhuinnin; musician Liam Byrne, artists Pati de Souza Leão Müller and Pete Qiang Dong; and the following students from the AA School of Architecture: Andreas Stylianou, Joyce Chen, Tamara Rasoul, Ziyad Mourad, Chuck Wang, Marion Delaporte, Leticia Dadalto, Daria Moussavi, Jack Hardy and Oliver Savorani.

the attention from the *actual artwork* that was on display, or we were ignored all together for it was all too queer to make sense of. It was the moments when *the other* members of public in the space were invited to join in with us, sometimes to participate in a touch exercise or a moving train[3], that affect became more tangible. I come to the question of what constitutes an invitation in audience participatory performance?

The last decade of work by choreographer Raja Feather Kelly introduced me to the notion of the agency of spectatorship. In their most recent work, *We May Never Dance Again* (2019) audiences confront the uncertainty of being spectators within a space that is deeply occupied by its own cultural production. Audiences are invited to question what it means to be voyeurs and watchers, and at what point silence becomes as complicit as loudness. The transactional nature of purchasing a ticket no longer stands in for either an invitation or consent, and this was central in thinking through the implications of *Radical Togetherness* which neither sought an audience, nor entered into clear transactional agreements.

In the museum, we soon began to identify the difference between participating by watching versus participating by moving. When members of the public were able to visually recognise certain socially choreographed forms, or resemblances of gatherings, the invitation to participate was easier to negotiate and accept. What further facilitated joining in was the scale of anonymity in the space, the difference of hosting at least a hundred individuals, a mass, rather than a handful of spectators. Once repetition was witnessed, such as a line of twenty people facing the same direction, walking or crawling with hands on each other's shoulders, more people would join in. What emerged from these interventions was a suggestion that the invitation for *social* choreographies was much more accessible

[3] A human moving-train involved one participant placing their hands on the shoulders of another, both facing the same direction. Gradually the line of people kept growing, until the direction of movement and manner of interaction was clear to follow. Once a fully formed train of people was formed, the first person would initiate a series of movements that would escalate down the line in a domino effect. This exercise, when performed without touch, is often referred to as *flocking* in contemporary dance teachings.

than *individualized* modes of authentic movement expression. Despite audience agreement and affective participation, the impermeability of the museums' rules and regulations still remained, under the watchful eyes of ushers and security staff. In 2019, visual artist Anne Imhof presented *Sex*, a compilation of her most famous works at The Tanks at Tate Modern. What was presented as an exciting possibility to explore atmospheric environments was curtailed by security guards continuously escorting audience members out of the venue, that is, those who attempted to engage with the work by responding to the cast's physical provocations. Audience-participation in this context was validated so long as it abided by standards where the performer replaced the art-object: *Don't touch the art, keep a minimum distance of one meter from the art, do not film, do not photograph with flash*, etc. As critic Adrian Searle writes for the Guardian:

> *The performers in Sex make you feel uncertain whether your presence is welcome. Meet their eyes and you get a good hard stare, or an expression of distain. Poking my head into a dark corner, a woman gives me a baleful look, and a young man's implacable expression tells me to fuck off. It's like being in a darkroom at a sex club. There is an etiquette. Don't get too close, don't interfere, no touching without consent. And then some guy pogos into me, and elbows his way between the viewers. What are the limits? Where should I be? Is eye contact allowed?* (Searle, 2019)

These experiences of the institutionalizing gaze of the museum led me to reflect on what spaces are void of protocol but whose foundations, walls and roofs still hold the semiotic history of protocol, ritual and spirit? This is what led me to choose repurposed or de-commissioned churches as the sites of future exploration. The architectural structures in this instance become the art-objects themselves, absent of rules and regulations regarding contact, distancing, media presence and audience-engagement.

Figure 2. *Radical Togetherness*, directed by the author, the first of three public sharings of Research and Development for the show *Constellations*. This image features performers Pau Aran Gimeno, Roni Katz & Charlie Cattrall, photographed by Moad Musbahi and presented at Asylum Chapel, August 2018, London, UK

The g[hosts] that live on when an architecture is left to die

In the summer of 2018, I began working on a group-show entitled *Constellations*, a two-and-a-half hour gathering in the round, a piece of unconventional dance-theatre that sat at the crossroads of a travelling circus, a dark comedy, ballroom, and phantasmagorical club hosted by ghostly archetypes. In the atmospheric settings that we designed, audiences were invited to reconsider who holds marginal and dominant roles within social spaces. Who leads and who follows? Who is in charge? Is the choreographer always directing? Is the lighting designer always fixed behind a lighting desk? Are the technicians only meant to operate behind the curtains and wear black attire? Can the theatre's staff be part of the show in a socially meaningful manner? Can the audience decide which route the show will take? Gender fluidity and social dancing were called upon to explore new ways of understanding contemporary social politics and the idea of radical togetherness. This involved not only the invitation for audiences and performers

to interact in a direct manner, but also for artists with radically diverse artistic practices to share airtime and stage-space at the same time while finding a way in which to perform through their artistic differences.

Our concern was not only focused on how to engage audiences in theatre, and how to advance notions of *immersive* performance within existing non-theatrical spaces, but rather how to bridge the conventional theatrical experience with the site-specific histories of the spaces and cities that lie outside of the black box. Representation is inescapable, so what does it mean to embody the stories of the characters we dance and narrate? How does architecture serve the embodiment of a story's context? How does choreography serve it? What is the purpose of costume and drag in this instance?

The beginning of our creation period for *Constellations*, involved the inhabitation of two derelict church-sites in London for the presentation of the work's early development. The first event took place in Caroline Gardens Chapel, located in a former early-19th century almshouse estate, *"a house where paupers are supported at the public expense; a poorhouse. Also a house set apart for the aged poor free of rent"* (Brewer, 2001, p.35). This specific almshouse once housed disparate, mentally ill and retired members of Peckham's Victorian community, who could seek refuge and sanctuary. Today, the space is known as Asylum Chapel, and is offered as a dry-hire venue, rented by an arts organization from the local council, sub-let to artists for performances and weddings. It is a very current example of a space that was once an asylum and is now easily monetized for its semiotics and *alternative* appearance.

The second space we inhabited was the Welsh Chapel, a former Presbyterian Church in the heart of London's Soho area, formerly known as the nightclub Limelight. Today it's run by a non-for-profit arts organization, looking to advance the fringe dance and theatre scene. As one could imagine, Asylum Chapel and Stone Nest are merely two, grade-II listed buildings; out of a handful of others of the kind that one comes across in a large metropolis like London. It's not a coincidence that performing arts organizations have found

Figure 3. *Radical Togetherness*, directed by the author, the second of three public sharings of Research and Development for the show *Constellations*. This image features performers Katye Coe, Roni Katz, Charlie Cattrall and audience members photographed by Moad Musbahi and presented at Stone Nest, August 2018, London, UK

these spaces, transforming them into theatrical stages without much need for restoration or engineering works. The presence of stunning natural lighting and faded, withered, ecclesiastical scenography prove to be quite the seductive backdrop to most contemporary performances and arts practices dealing with notions of ritual and ceremony. I recognize that my own practice has played a part in this trend, and so I'm beckoned to dive deeper into questioning what that does; occupying spaces that represent paradox, safe harbors of once-dominant religions but also homes to the more quieted, underground, queer, and spiritual orientations of society?

What if we were now to examine the notion of audience participation in the performing arts through a psychogeogprahic lens as we address questions like: how do we arrive to empathy, resonance, and connection through spatial sensing? How do we safely negotiate contracts of *consent* in black box spaces when treading the delicate line between therapeutic and performative practices?

What's the difference between offering these practices in a church and offering them in a theatre? What changes? What remains the same? Which boundaries are transgressed and what new possibilities emerge?

Questions that surfaced whilst visiting these sites were about the coercion between ourselves as performers and the site, that is "a relationship of violence in waiting for the 'spectacle'" (Castellucci, 2007, p.204). We thus had to distance ourselves from the learned history of the churches in that very moment and explore the internal volume through purely animalistic awareness. This method of creation takes inspiration from the theatre of Socìetas Raffaello Sanzio, and works such as *Tragedia Endogonidia* (2003). As Romeo Castellucci described:

> *In this project, the relation between space and the city is very important, and the theatre we perform in is like a metonym of the particular city we are visiting, so the relation to the space is fundamental. In every instance, there's a sort of animalistic response to the space as volume; it's not an architectonic space but a volume, a cavity, like a volume of a sculpture. I mean that facing any space you can have an animal, infantile reaction to its volume; it becomes very clear and evident how this volume can speak.* (Castellucci, 2007, p.203)

The storyline of *Constellations*, follows the archetypes of the witch and the fool and questions their historic relationship to gender representations and the spaces that they historically occupied in society. What would happen to our contemporary biases if pop culture presented witches as men and fools as women, or abolished gender all together in the presentation of these fictionalized and aestheticized figures? We cannot reverse centuries of gendered patriarchal depictions, from Dürer's etchings[4] and Goya's paintings[5] to Disney's animated films[6]. We can however be relentless in exercising an alternative portrayal of

[4] E.g. *The Witch*, etched by Albrecht Dürer in 1500.
[5] E.g. *El Aquelarre* (*Witches' Sabbath*), painted by Francisco Goya in 1798.
[6] E.g. The Evil Queen, also featured as an old hag in Disney's 1959 production of *The Sleeping Beauty*.

archetypes and folklore in the 21st century, if we are first able to understand them as genderless entities. In visiting Asylum Chapel and Stone Nest, I asked my collaborators to use their felt-sense[7] to feel into the history of the rooms, neither of which were foreign to the *witches and fools* of 19th century Victorian society or the queer club-scene of the 1980's. We channeled the spirits of the 19th century fool and witch to bring more tangible experiences closer to our nervous systems' perception.

Constellations' enquiry into the architectures we inhabited drew equally from the traditions of psychogeography, and therefore invited us to sense into the stories that may linger on in buildings that have been abandoned, lost function and/or purpose. As Guy Debord states in his Introduction to a Critique of Urban Geography, "Psychogeography could set for itself the study of the precise laws and specific effects of the geographical environment, whether consciously organized or not, on the emotions and behavior of individuals" (Debord, 1955). We consciously sensed into the spirit of the churches, whilst tuning inwards to the bodily sensations arising from dancing in such environments. We tracked our own excitement, fear, curiosity, anger, and love that arose amongst us and later our spectators. We also learned to recognize that which does not belong to us but instead belongs to the stories of the materials that surround us. We left these spaces honoring the experience and further crafting our relationship to the archetypes we evolved into throughout the project.

These research findings often led us to heated discussions around the split between the personal and the political, the personal and the artistic; could they ever be separate, or are they always one and the same? In these moments I often reflected on the way that the repetition of representation features in works such as those by Pina Bausch/Tanztheater Wuppertal, where "by incorporating dance's

[7] To use one's felt sense often means to observe the quality of sensations emerging from the gut, rather than the brain. Felt-sense is a common term in most somatic-based therapies, relying on information created by the body's Vagus nerve, then perceived by our neo-cortex. Please read Stephen Porges' *The Polyvagal Theory* for a more in-depth and fuller understanding.

inherent split and incompleteness, dance theatre brings frightening moments of 'non-representation' on to the stage" (Fernandes, 2001, p.84). I encouraged the performers to stay with this tension of channeling fictional archetypes and also staying present with their own non-representation. During the first public sharings, the spectators were equally invited to question their own role, real or imagined, within the performative field.

The creation of this piece was very much fuelled by the personal practices of my performance collaborators and artists. And so, I draw a parallel to the choreographic enquiries of Katye Coe, a dance-artist and dance-agent who has spent a year[8] harvesting and catalyzing public forums and sharings about what it means to dance as a way of understanding *living*, often rooted in unspoken epistemologies of knowledge, specifically inviting audiences to witness the moments during and immediately after the *dancing* has taken place. Coe recounts:

> *This enquiry is rooted in my own and shared experiences in performing dancing. The two affirmations at the root of this project are:*
>
> *…that performing dancing can be experienced as an act of surrender. These experiences may be shared with other people, communities and working practices for which witnessing the act of surrender is part of the everyday. These might include people who experience and support human processes like birth and death.*
>
> *…that in the period of time immediately after dancing, either in performance*

[8] Katye Coe was the first Torchlight Artist at Siobhan Davies Dance, whose investigation from her position as a dancer of the themes of surrender and the afterwards led her to meaningful encounters with many of her peers, but also with midwives, hospice workers and many others. Siobhan Davies Dance's Torchlight Artists Programme supports dance artists and choreographers with one year to investigate something of urgency to their practice, which resonates with the interests of other artists or professionals in the dance field and beyond, and can engage diverse publics.

> *or in periods of intense rehearsal or research, dancers can embody rich and important material and information. This material is often left unspoken, not shared or not given a value or the right resources to meets its complexity. Capturing and describing this information is crucial to realizing and sharing the value of experiencing performing and watching dancing.* (Coe, 2019)

Eventually, we too invited the audience into our process. The question we occupied ourselves with was how a group of performers can transfer and convey the transgenerational meeting and somatic sensing to a stranger while channeling the ancestral lineage of a historic site? Resourced by Coe's call to share 'the value of experiencing performing' and Pina Bausch's methods of repetition and non-representation; touch and conversation in movement was one of the ways we approached this ambitious prompt. That is, by introducing structured forms of social dancing, principally waltzing between audience and performer and later audience and audience. In engaging in such a way, audiences were asked to occupy the perceived stage space in the churches and enter into unknown territory as the performers whisked them away from their seats. It is hard to fully transcribe what happened in those moments. The performers, decked out in drag, make-up and costume, were not only present as themselves, but were also embodying the spirit of the space that we were in. In that moment, when the members of the audience were being invited to dance, they were also engaging in a social dance with characters long gone, fools, witches, ancestors who live on in the floors and walls of a derelict architecture.

The soft edges between the therapeutic and the theatrical

What I had learned from the Vienna interventions and *Radical Togetherness*, was that the way an invitation is made can be the single most important act in a show. Through trial and error, we discovered that it could take very little to trigger individuals not expecting such a demanding encounter, or worse, re-traumatize them. When working with the effects of audience participation on

audience's nervous systems, safety comes first. Breaking the fourth wall can often involve entering uncharted territory, especially when operating in buildings not designed for theatrical interventions. *Constellations* sits within an artistic climate where re-negotiating the contracts of consent in audience-participatory dance and theatre is definitely in need of urgent debate, especially when protocols of consent are easily overlooked. In her review of *10,000 Gestures* (2018) by Boris Charmatz, writer Lauren Wingenroth states:

> *Those who've experienced trauma shouldn't have to relive it by having strangers aggressively invade their personal space. No one should have to dodge getting feet or genitals in their faces. And some people simply don't want to be touched by strangers for reasons they shouldn't have to explain.* (Wingenroth, 2018)

We're a society that's becoming increasingly aware of personal, social and ancestral trauma, so any audience participation needs to come from a clear invitation. This is where therapeutic modalities around consent lent themselves well to a rehearsal and performative process, testing how strangers could be invited into intimate spaces without feeling overwhelmed or pressured to perform in a certain way. In our case, a hand gesture or sentence were used as bridges from the outside into the inside, with direct intention and clarity.

The show was completed in June 2019, when the piece was presented in the black box setting of the Lilian Baylis Theatre at Sadler's Wells. We had incorporated full theatrical lighting, transformative costumes, and a mechanized set. In full bliss and magic of what was created, I often reflect on that which was lost from the initial church performances. The compromise of using all that the theatre could offer in the creation of this *dreamtime*, we lost the imposing backdrop of the church, the natural daylight, the stained glass windows, and the silence of death that lives on in the materiality of the built. What remains is the embodiment of these spaces and their [g]hosts through the performers' felt experiences, their somatic memory and choreographic recounting.

Figure 4. *Constellations*, directed by the author. This image features performer Sara Ruddock, Pau Aran Gimeno, Roni Katz, Charlie Cattrall and Katye Coe performing the ritual sacrifice of the Fool, photographed by Camilla Greenwell and presented at Sadler's Wells Theatre, June 2019, London, UK

A couple of weeks before *Constellations* premiered, I was at a loss as to how all of these varied practices and fields would weave their way together. It had become a challenge to integrate all the collaborators' varied artistic practices into one cohesive show, whilst retaining an abundance of content generated from each of our site-specific church improvisations. What did we learn by performing in the churches? How could we possibly convey the immensity of the stories we felt in an ever-changing neutralized theatrical space? How do we negotiate what are often unspoken contracts with audiences that we have never met before? At

this stage I facilitated a Systemic Constellation[9] in service to the work, where the piece as a meta-physical entity became the client, the cast became participants to their own performance, and I acted as facilitator. Twenty volunteers acted as representatives—characters featuring in our process so far, being invited into the deep end of our group process to help the ensemble discern what material, both personal and fictional, to keep and which to let go of.

After four shows, the question still remains: how little or how much audience participation does one need to arrive to meaningful modes of resonance, both with the individuals and with the collective as whole?

I position this enquiry by referencing two different dance & theatre works dealing with notions of time and knowledge production, addressing audience participation in very different ways. The first is *No-How Generator* (2019) by choreographer Matthias Sperling, which explores the neuroscientific and hypnotic effects of looped sound & voice and carefully constructed lighting design. Over the span of an hour, audiences are somatically transported into deep energy wells of contemplation, spiritual dissociation and expansion. The second is *A 24-Decade History of Popular Music* (2016) by artist Taylor Mac, where "the audience participation is almost constant, pushing us way out of our comfort zone and ensuring that we remain engaged". After 24 hours of staying awake in a show, a different state of spectatorship is achieved, for "staying up for such a long time has a strange effect on one's state of mind". These two enchanting opuses made me reflect on our methodologies of incantational duration versus quick fire participation. I decided to look for a way to titrate the show's mood between moments of high activation and moments of subdued relaxation.

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[9] The labels "sculpture", "reconstruction", and "constellation" are often used synonymously. They refer to a method in which persons are "set up" as representatives of elements of a system in a space. When present this way, observers or therapists can elicit information about a system that would otherwise be nearly impossible to gather at the same level of complexity through verbal means. Depending upon the theoretical model used by the therapist, the information gathered has to do with the quality of the relationships between members or with the structural characteristics of the system. As with psychodrama, situations can be reproduced in various time periods, including the present, the past, and a possible future through the use of sculptures (Franke, 2003, pp.27-28).

Whilst the systemic constellation achieved a depth of empathy and resonance in a short period of time through constant physical audience-participation, the actual shows relied on durational intermittent participation to reach similar wells of emotion. The choice I had to make was between therapeutizing a theatrical experience or theatricalizing a therapeutic context. The former lent itself better and more unobtrusively to our creative process. What resulted was a two-and-a-half-hour medley of vignettes where audiences were in constant flux between scenes of trance-like meditation and dynamic social dancing.

What I propose in conclusion is an invitation towards re-thinking the ways in which we gather and the practices that we share when we do. In hindsight I might say that the more radical performances dealing with architectural historical resonance were the ones that happened in the church-sites with more intimate audience numbers. These moments held a level of improvisation and honesty through non-representation that were made possible by the environment and context we were in. On the other hand, when these ancestral stories were shown at Sadler's Wells, translated through the spectacle of set, costumes, lighting, and technology, the entire experience was elevated technically, whilst placing the non-representational narrative under greater strain. What I observed through the audience-participatory lens was that the audiences in the churches were invited to embody the felt narrative of the space through a more literal experience, conversation, and contact with the performers. The architecture of the churches did away with the need for theatricality, leaving us in service to the sunlight, weather, temperature and g[hosts] of the edifice. The difference between the performances and their respective venues was almost incomparable, leaving me with even more questions about the ways in which we might theatricalize unconventional performance sites, or perhaps not at all.

Architecture serves a central purpose here. It is a container that holds performances, human encounters, and social choreographies disguised as the systemic constellations of our lives. The research and performance work I have done so far suggests that we must look to the spaces that we currently have

Figure 5. *Constellations*, directed by the author. This image features performer Roni Katz with a member of audience, photographed by Camilla Greenwell and presented at Sadler's Wells Theatre, June 2019, London, UK

access to, the built and unbuilt environments that have served one or many purposes and now sit waiting or slumbering. Sensing into the geo-social ancestry of these spaces offers an effective way of telling a story, of creating theatre. Translating those stories from performer to audience holds the possibility for empathy to be generated between the living and the dead, the forgotten, and the missing. It is this moment of translation which is key. What I learned from *Radical Togetherness* was that the unpolished storytelling of felt experiences and exchanges brought greater humanity to the methods and processes of public engagement. To achieve similar impacts within the black-box required a greater level of trust-building, as we competed with the inherent social protocols of what the theatre traditionally allows for or doesn't. I end with an invitation.

In the extraordinary times that we are currently living in, don't be afraid to risk updating the traditions of spatiality, orientation and audience engagement. One definition of trauma is the fixation of an idea, structure or protocol, and without

that fixation, we might just be surprised by all the possibilities that the unknown can offer us.

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THEATRICAL ARCHITECTURAL BUILDINGS AND COMMUNITY: TEATRO CONTÊINER MUNGUNZÁ

LUÍSA PINTO

Recent set design distances itself from the pictorial two-dimensionality that characterized stage architecture for many years. The three-dimension space in the scene exploration is connected with the modern theatre renovation and it began with Adolphe Appia, who turned the scenic space into a laboratory of possibilities.

Appia refused realism or naturalism and used expressive and symbolic elements of theatre, music and light. He was the first one to use shadows in the stage, creating spaces with more depth and distance, thereby suggesting new theatre lighting concepts (Appia, s/a).

This Swiss theatre director and set designer understood light to be an essential tool in stage's life. For Appia, the dramatic work should be an expression of movement in space; the movable body in space supported by words, sounds and musical rhythmic times that determine the duration of movements. Only in this way could staging be the basis for a work of art. However, the need of arts' emancipation lead artists to leave the conventional places intended for artistic creation and, consequently, to occupy the streets and alternative spaces; becoming closer to the audience and people.

Recently, lots of creators devote themselves to artistic creations taking place in non-conventional spaces. These are different spaces that can be turned into theatrical places, where the artistic shows can be performed.
The architectonic building becomes another dramaturgical element, allowing new possibilities of artistic experimentation in the occupation of scenic space. In João Mendes Ribeiro's words:

> *(...) a stage even deprived of any scenographic elements can be an object and inspiration of multiple appropriations. It can make a space of qualified performance, insofar as it allows the audience to project itself, with a huge imaginative freedom, in the absence of scenarios or scenic elements that usually build the sense of what is seen.* (Ribeiro, 2007, pp.84-85)

Thus, we can understand that when the stage action is moved into a non-conventional space the occupation of that space will allow new perspectives regarding the questions presented by the theatrical text, insofar as the architectonic building becomes part of the action.
Thus, the following questions arise: what roles the theatrical architectural buildings have been performing, recently? To what extent the spatial arrangement influences the artistic object creation in contemporaneity, allowing a greater proximity with the audience and how it redefines itself in new functions and by new social actors contributing to the appreciation of the dimension of place.
Artistic proposals have exploded in a multiplicity of ways searching for answers to the demands of each time, always in connection with political, economic, social, cultural and technological revolutions (Walter, 1994). For example modern theatre directors have been questioning the function of theatre, so they started researching new possibilities of communication between the stage and the audience, proposing reflections about the spectator's role, what raises a productive attitude concerning the scene.
This issue is ongoing and it is understood as one feature of contemporary theatre

Figure 1. Contêiner Theatre, 2018. Photograph: Victor Lemini

(Desgranges, 2011).

The importance of this new research field is clear and gives relevance to projects whose artistic concerns are allied with ethical and social questions, which allows us to understand that these changes reveal a will to educate and transform in modern artistic creation. It is important to understand these trends in theatre-making as a consequence of the need to communicate and the urgency of finding adequate answers to contemporary issues, through the local and collective construction of spaces of intervention, where the architectonic buildings are regarded as platforms of human-dimension derived from creative processes (Figure 1).

The Mungunzá Contêiner Theatre arises as an exemplary architecture project whose aims are inscribed in the built object for artistic creation in articulation with the community and its territory, such as: the debureaucratization and democratization of access to Art, Culture and Citizenship, through an intensive

Figure 2. Contêiner Theatre, 2018. Photograph: Marco António

programme that mixes artistic, cultural, educational, methodological and academic proposals. It is open to every kind of audience (Figure 2), with popular prices or even for free[1].

The Mungunzá Contêiner Theatre is a cultural pole and is also used as the head office of Mungunzá company, the creators and developers of project. The building is located in the central region of São Paulo/Santa Ifigênia, in an empty urban depressed space, which gathers marginalized people, such as drug consumers and homeless people. The theatre was built in 2016 through partnerships with Brazilian collectives and foreign architecture students (Figure 3), from institutions as the FAU, Escola da Cidade, Alanus Hochschule für Kunst und Gesellschaft, among others[2].

[1] Available in: https://www.ciamungunza.com.br/
[2] Available in: https://www.ciamungunza.com.br/

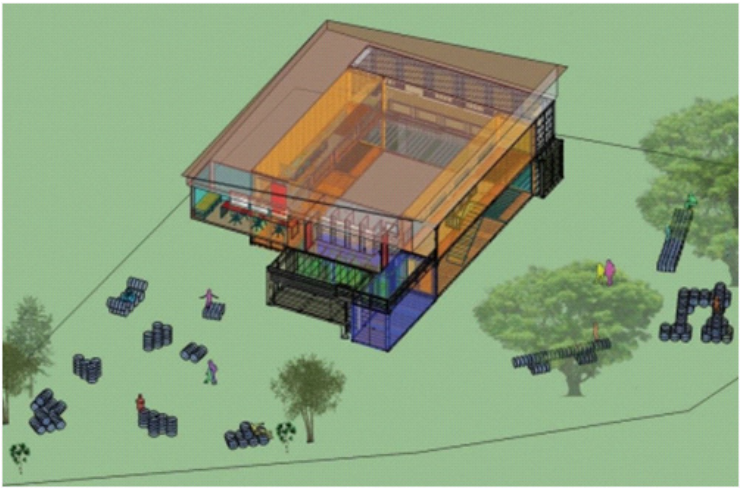

Figure 3. Architectural project of Contêiner Theatre, June 2016. Mungunzá Co. archive

This building is constituted by eleven shipping containers, the stage is flexible and can be used as arena, semi-arena or italian stage. Two containers break the darkness of boxes with glass walls which enable actors and audience to see and to be seen by the people from the street. There is also an office and the dressing rooms with glass walls, which allows the outside audience to watch the construction process of a character before he or she goes on stage (Figure 4).

The spatial division of the Mungunzá Contêiner Theatre provides a more horizontal and human relationship with the spectator. The scenography of many projects staged in this space integrate the pre-existing architectural building, which becomes an integral part of action; it is about one free space, without any set division between the performing space (stage) and the audience, which allows, during the assembly, to determine where the spectators and the actors will be placed.

Figure 4. Contêiner Theatre dressing room, 2018. Photograph: Marco António

The relevance that this project confers on the proposed aims of its creators can be seen in the bar (where vegan and vegetarian meals contribute to decrease the impact on climatic changes, deforestation and pollution). This is an architectural sustainable project that was conceived to reduce the environmental impact, seeing that it's a building which does not produce garbage and reuses objects and natural resources. The building includes translucent glass walls, which allows it to be illuminated by sunlight, contributing to save electricity. Other significant component of the building is its surroundings, a hydroponic vegetable garden (Figure 5), made of reused water, so that the local community is impelled to take care of it and take food home[3].

According to the history of theatre plays produced by the company, among them the awarded *Luís António Gabriela,* wich received a SHELL award, and *Poema*

[3] Available in: https://www.ciamungunza.com.br/

Figure 5. Hydroponic workshop in Contêiner Theatre, 2019. Mungunzá Theatre Co. archive

suspenso para cidade em queda, with a PROAC award, we can understand that the project doesn't just instrumentalize art for other purposes than art. Even that ethical/social concerns are also present in the intervention project of Mungunzá Contêiner Theatre, it becomes more evident for me that the deepest impact in populations that live in isolated or marginalized territories was born from projects whose artistic goals supported the creation of these social actors in interaction with cultural expressions and society. So, the need of exploring different ways in art making arises from this context: think about architectural buildings which promote local social actors aesthetic and symbolic experiences which represent collective experiences that a specific territory is able to appreciate.

> *It received 150 thousand people, in only two years, with several activities related to education, art, leisure and social assistance. It was awarded with APCA award, in the "special" category. The project was unanimous among*

civil society, researchers, the public power and the private sector. The project counts with the support and the partnership of Prefecture of São Paulo – Municipal Culture Secretary[4].

Final considerations

This study shows the relevance that a contemporary and ecologically sustainable building has to reaffirm the idea of approximation between culture, community and architecture. The excellence of the mentioned project guarantees a clear view of the humanizing process in the occupation of an architectural building in the reframing of the territory and in the affective creation of interpersonal relationships as a strategy of communication and approximation to community, from an experience which demands an intervention that overtakes the boundaries of artistic creation; therefore, it is urgent to think of architectural buildings which promote, for local social actors, aesthetic, symbolic experiences that represent collective experiences of a certain territory to value.

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[4] Available in: https://www.ciamungunza.com.br/

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FOOTBRIDGE AUDITORIUM

KATARZYNA ZAWISTOWSKA

Footbridge auditorium

Nowadays, theatre is perhaps the last place with public character where we can experience our emotions and question our true selves. But, are we really able to create a common place where we can be present together at the very moment? As stage has been changing due to technology and its visual convention, I have been wondering if changing the spatial organisation of auditorium will have an impact on the perception of performance?

1. Architecture of auditorium

The main subject of my research is auditorium as a spatial structure and its impact on the sense of perception. In my opinion, the question about a new type of auditorium is very current. What is the next spatial form of the auditorium which may give viewers more freedom in experiencing their own behaviour and participation in performance?

We distinguish between two types of auditoriums which we are mostly familiar with, namely: amphitheatrical auditorium and gallery auditorium. Both are designed in order to hear and see what happens on the stage by taking an advantage of the two senses mentioned above.

Even if our understanding of visual perception has advanced recently, we should remember about the role of other senses in our perception of any performance. We gain more confidence to support it with various senses. Consequently, it is important to realise, how different the way in which a spectator perceives performance today is than it was 100 years ago. I am convinced, that we should shift our focus towards spectator as a main user of theatrical space, who is already aware of relational aesthetics (Bishop, 2004) and participating art (Bishop, 2012).

The sensory impressions that our body receives, related to the reading of space in motion, could be used in theatre. The kinaesthetic sense could be a new tool in creating the spectacle! If viewers are allowed to change their observation point during performance, the question is how spectacle itself, its space and set design should be constructed? Also, auditorium should take on a totally different architectural form.

If performances take place outside the theatrical buildings, the auditoriums are created for a site-specific project and formed according to the effect the creators want to achieve. Unfortunately, there is no permanent architectural record of any different forms of auditoriums.

While conducting my research I have noticed that if performance is played outside theatre, the amphitheatre type of its structure is commonly used and there is little or no interest in experimenting with new forms of the audience architecture. In my view, this subject deserves greater attention because we simply need a new type of auditorium which will go in line with the needs of contemporary viewers.

2. What is going to change for the spectator?

In my opinion auditorium is also a part of public space, where every passer-by becomes a viewer right after exceeding the threshold of theatre. It is a performative moment, but after that, the viewer has to be seated in the dark auditorium, and uses three out of his five senses, except from hearing and seeing.

In this case, the viewer becomes a passive recipient. That is why an active viewer, who becomes aware through using all senses, is in my field of interest.

When reviewing the most of Avant-Garde projects focused on the relations between auditorium and stage, I have realised that they do not present any new idea linked to the perception of performance! Walter Gropius in his Total Theatre (1927) thanks to the mechanical rotating gave us three options of the stage: with audience on one side, stage surrounded by audience from three sides and with a central stage surrounded by audience from all sides (Zuvillaga, 2004).

This idea of mechanical rotating was developed in the project of polish architect Szymon Syrkus in his Simultaneous Theatre (1928) in which the stage got more advanced shape of the two rotate rings (Surkusowie, 1930).

It is significant that both architects designed amphitheatrical type of auditorium, so viewers become passive in the perception of performance. Even if both projects of theatres include an attractive proposal by bringing film projection inside them or new technology such as hydraulic trapdoors or revolve scenes, unfortunately they have never been built.

Nowadays, technology has advanced, and we are able to build these theatres with modern equipment that will facilitate any theatrical production yet, my question is what might be changed for the spectator as a user of an auditorium? Today's viewers perception has changed, but auditorium reproduces patterns from the past!

It is time we searched for a more up-to-date architecture of it.

My PhD dissertation was entirely devoted to this problem. I entitled it "Inter|auditorium. Architecture of the auditorium and the city" and defended it at the Academy of Fine Arts in Gdańsk in 2013.

My thesis justified that today we should not build the auditorium in the way which is so different from the contemporary needs. I pointed out that we should discover a new form of auditorium. We should use the energy which the passer-by has outside the theatre before he becomes a viewer.

The passer-by can actively observe while moving in space, but the viewer often

becomes passive in this respect. Auditorium space can activate the viewer, but this experience requires a new form of it.

3. New auditorium: footbridge auditorium

I am suggesting a new type of auditorium: footbridge auditorium. In this auditorium viewers can move and change their viewing position during performance due to the spatial system with ramps and platforms. They do not have to sit at one place like at the traditional auditorium and thus use all their senses, especially kinaesthetic one.

How it might work in practice? I have tried to examine this idea in two of my projects.

First one, Inter|Theatre was my architectural proposal of the advanced space of Shakespearean theatre (2005). It is the historical fact that in the 17th century the copy of The Fortune Theatre from London was built in Gdańsk. English actors visited this city to give performance. Unfortunately, there was no theatrical building there at that time, so they probably brought the layout of Elizabethan theatres (Limon, 1989). From this moment on, the building made of wood functioned in Gdańsk as a seasonal theatre for almost 200 years.

Both the shape and size of the galleries were created in accordance with the square plan of The Fortune Theatre. Three-level galleries with seats were the spatial prototype of the gallery auditorium. In my project the observation area was equipped with the additional structure of bridges and ramps. It was my interference in the aforementioned gallery auditorium. This structure allows viewers to participate in any performance and change their viewing position. In my model, this structure is marked in red. I can say that it might be the prototype of footbridge auditorium.

My second project named Cicada was a six meters high spatial installation with ramps and platforms made from scaffoldings. I designed and presented it in South Korea during artistic residency by the invitation of Hooyong Performing Arts Centre (2008). The idea was that only one viewer can take part in the

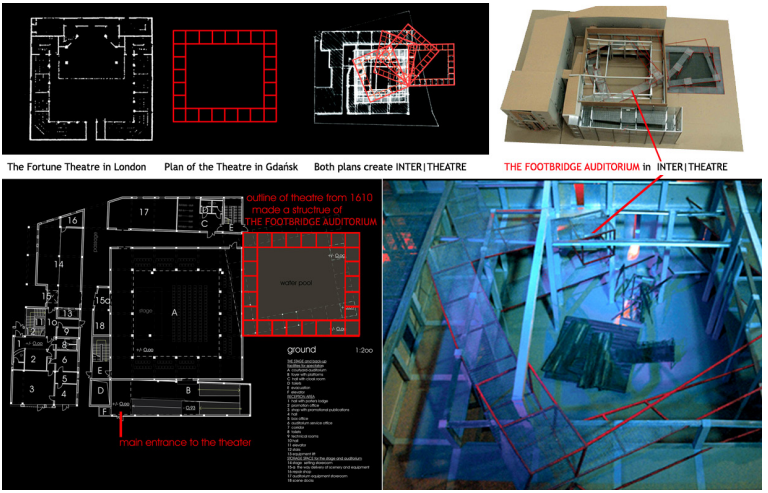

Figure 1. Inter|Theatre was presented during Prague Quadrennial in 2007 on the exhibition connected with 7th OISTAT Theatre Architecture Competition, *organised* by OISTAT Architecture Commission

performance by climbing up the ramps and simultaneously being in the inner space of this installation. The observation area was only from the ramps and platforms. The viewer was moving and observing the ongoing process on the stage when performer thanks to wearing the coat with wings became just like a cicada. The actor and the viewer were able to meet at the last level of the installation.

I think that this experimental installantion might be the prototype of footbridge auditorium.

The next question I would like to raise is what the architecture can offer to performing artists today? Perhaps influencing the senses of the recipients is the point at which architecture, both as the art of space creation, and theatre as the art of giving meaning, can inspire each other and look for new solutions in searching for some new forms of the auditorium.

It is interesting how the spatial form of auditorium shapes viewers' behaviour

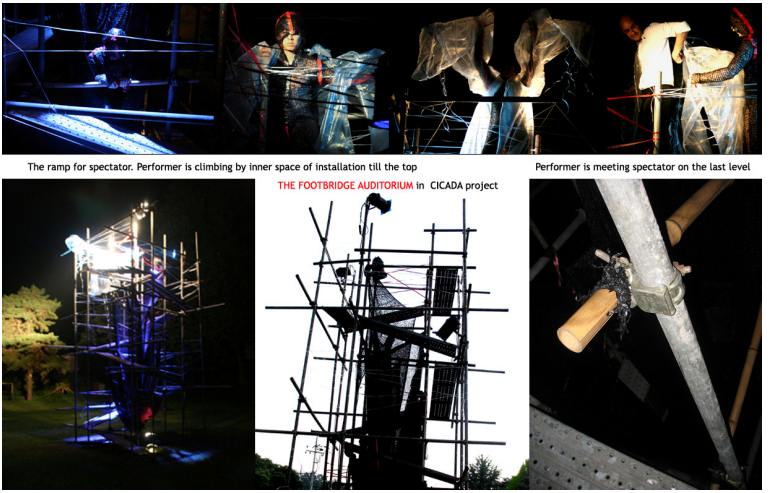

Figure 2. Cicada project was the spatial installation which took place at Hooyong Performing Arts Centre in South Korea in August 2008

because social distancing means something different to everyone due to both cultural and social factors. However, some architectural patterns force us to change our behaviour and act the same way as others.

What is the essence of the spatial relationship between people in the theatre: between actors, spectators and between spectators themselves? Is it shaped only by theatrical architecture? What may happen if viewers do not have to sit in the armchairs, will it make them more involved in the performance?

The variable dynamics of such audience would require a completely different construction of the spectacle's space. I am fascinated with the moment when an actor will be confronted with the situation in which he meets the viewer face to face. It means that the viewer position in an auditorium will be not entirely predictable. Most of theatrical directors wish to keep control over the performance however, I hope that some of them will be open for the new spatial possibilities.

I will quote here the famous and repeatedly cited beginning of Peter Brook's book, "The Empty Space":

> *I can take any empty space and call it a bare stage. A man walks across this empty space whilst someone else is watching him, and this is all that is needed for an act of theatre to be engaged.* (Brook, 1996, p.7)

In this first sentence I have exchanged the word *stage* for the word *auditorium*: "I can take any empty space and call it a bare (...)" **auditorium**. The rest of sentence remains untouched and may give us an interesting vision: one man observes another one in the auditorium. This observing man is active, and he is the viewer at the same time.
Are we ready to change the paradigm, so far based on active: observed and passive: observer?

4. The typology of auditorium

While I have been working on the theory linked to the topic, I decided to go beyond the binary layout of stage versus auditorium. Every stage is governed by its own rules, staging and specialised requirements connected with technology. Also, we know historical and technological transformation of stage very well. I have decided that stage is not entirely in my fields of interest! Thanks to this division, auditorium will free itself from juxtaposing it with stage, recovering its own autonomy as an architectural part of the interiors which consist of the floor, walls and ceiling. These three elements also create the urban interiors but instead of ceiling we have the sky. This distinction was helpful to create the typology that I have taken an advantage of while doing my research.
I have prepared the formal typology of auditorium, which presents amphitheatrical auditorium and gallery auditorium. In my typology I have compared plan and section of various theatres, which show that amphitheatrical auditorium is a part of the floor. Whereas gallery auditorium is a part of the wall. I have created

spatial models of floors and walls and juxtaposed them together.
Consequently, footbridge auditorium might be a part of ceiling as the system of ramps and bridges. All of them are hanging over scene and auditorium. This footbridge auditorium can bring us behind-the-scenes and show us the hidden infrastructure behind the Fourth Wall.
I am going to present the models and description of amphitheatrical and gallery auditorium that consist of the typology used in my research. In both cases I analysed the same Théâtre de la Ville in Paris as a very interesting example of exchanging auditorium from the gallery to the amphitheatre. Even though the two types of auditoriums exist in our culture they are not sufficient to the contemporary viewer so I am going to take a closer look at the new type of auditorium: **footbridge auditorium** which might better to suit the current needs of the viewers.

4.1. The formal typology of amphitheatre auditorium

The amphitheatre has its origins in the classical Greek theatre, and it is the first example in my formal typology of amphitheatrical auditorium. I have chosen a few examples which are relevant in the history of theatre construction precisely because of the use of amphitheatrical auditorium. In each of them, the amphitheatrical auditorium consists of gradually surpassing rows of seats which is needed to see and hear the action on stage well, but the difference is in the structure of a massif. By using the word – massif – I mean the layout of the rows together which forms the amphitheatrical type of auditorium and resembles a compact group of steps.
The result is a division into the three following categories:

I. Auditorium floor massif integrated with natural ground

• Teatre in Epidauros, Greece / 4th Century before Christ

The classical Greek theatre, *theatron* had no walls, its architectural interior provided only the appropriate shape of the floor. *Theatron* created a place for

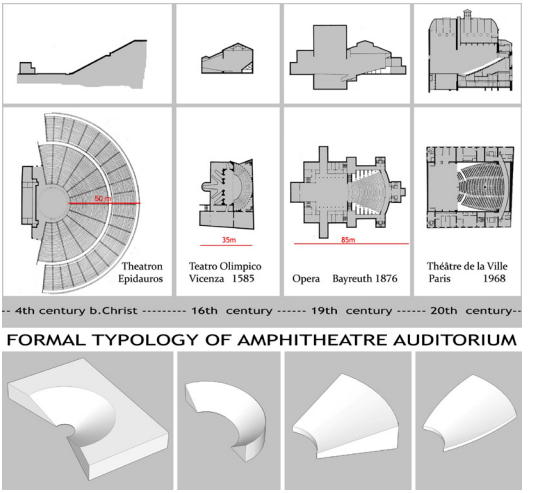

Figure 3. The formal typology of amphitheatre auditorium

viewers where the semi-circular rows of seats were surpassed gradually. It is worth mentioning that all ancient and modern outdoor theatres were built according to the landforms, where the floor massif models of amphitheatrical auditorium, belong to this category.

II. Auditorium floor massif supported by an architectural structure

• Teatro Olimpico in Vicenza, Italy / 16th century

In the classical Roman theatre, amphitheatre auditorium was a part of the floor, but there were walls and pillars instead of the slope of the hill and that is why it was the first free-standing theatrical building. Renaissance Teatro Olimpico in Vicenza was a copy of this kind of building as an independent, wooden construction. But the difference was that this theatrical building had a roof.

• Opera in Bayreuth, Germany/ 19th century

After two centuries of using gallery auditorium, the amphitheatre auditorium was

used in the Opera in Bayreuth at the end of 19th century. The plan of auditorium was constructed as a segment of the circle. This amphitheatre auditorium gently shaped low steps as a part of the floor. The massif of the auditorium was based on the structure belonging to the building. All contemporary amphitheatrical auditoriums from 20th and 21st century belonged to the aforesaid category.

III. Auditorium floor massif suspended in an architectural structure

• Théâtre de la Ville in Paris / exchanging of the auditorium in the 20th century

This theatre was built in the years 1860-1862 in accordance with the design of Gabriel Davioud during the reconstruction of Paris by Georges Haussmann. In 1967-1968 it was rebuilt by two architects Valentin Fabre and Jean Perrottet (Breton, 1990).

The change from the gallery auditorium into the amphitheatrical – more democratic one – took place at the special moment. The social protests and events of 1968 had the far-reaching effects on France's cultural, political, and economic life. In my opinion, the significant question of the types of auditorium in theatrical architecture had to be raised here. Architects overhung the structure of new auditorium to be even above the foyer space. This new structure was visible when looking from outside as a compact group of steps.

4.2. The formal typology of gallery auditorium

The theatres which I have chosen are free-standing buildings with gallery auditorium and flat floor. I am going to start with the London's Elizabethan theatre. In each of them, gallery auditorium was a part of the wall by stacking the rows so the viewer might have seen and heard well what was happening on the stage. In the formal typology of gallery auditorium, I have depicted some differences resulting from placing the wall massif which formed galleries inside theatre building.

The result is a division into two categories:

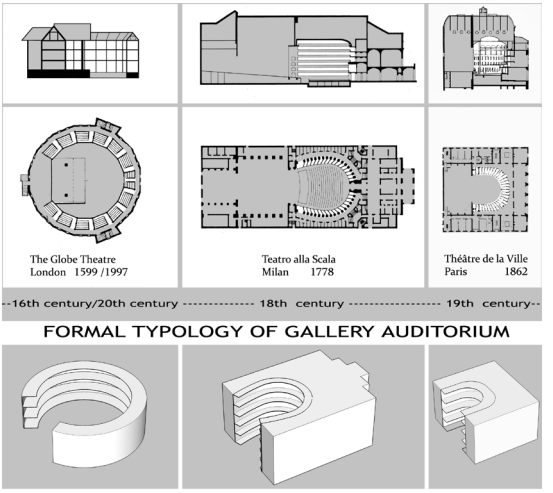

Figure 4. The formal typology of gallery auditorium

I. Auditorium wall massif create the external form of the building

• The Globe Theatre in London, England / 16th century – reconstruction of the building in the end 20th century

The London's Elizabethan theatre is an original solution because auditorium is a massif of wall, which also creates the form of the entire building.

They were free-standing public theatres with flat ground. The gallery auditorium models the wall massif as a three-level structure with its own roofing.

II. Auditorium wall massif immerse inside the building

• Teatro alla Scala in Milano, Italy / 18th century

The gallery auditorium was the part of walls inside the building. Italian Baroque theatre from the 18th century and its variants from the 19th century differently immersed the massif of walls of auditorium in the structure of building. Comparison placement of auditorium of these theatres brought some

interesting conclusions. Theatres immersed their audiences to varying depths as they expanded the viewer's service zone. It depended on the scale of the city or the prestige of the building. In general, the first Italian theatres had more modest cubic capacities compared to later French theatres like Garnier Opera.

- Théâtre de la Ville in Paris, France / the original form of auditorium 19th century

We can compare how this original gallery auditorium from the 19th century looked like because its twin building still exists. It is Chatelet du Théâtre designed by the same architect Gabriel Davioud. This musical theatre is located in front of Théâtre de la Ville.

4.3. Form of the footbridge auditorium. Intertwining ideas

Each type of auditorium models a different part of the architectural interiors of the theatre. Gallery auditorium models the massif of the wall and creates space for viewers, stacking up the rows successively, one above the other.

Amphitheatre auditorium models the floor massif and creates space for viewer surpassing the rows gradually. The third type of auditorium models ceiling or its area. In this way footbridge type of auditorium might be created.

During my research, I have found a few prototypes. One of them is in Teatro Oficina in Sao Paulo made of scaffolds. It was designed by Lina Bo Bardi and Edison Elito (1995) as a system of platforms along very narrow space of the stage. Three levels of platforms allow spectators to observe the action on the stage but still the stage and auditorium are separated.

But my way of reasoning goes more in line with the ideas of Avant-Garde artists such as: Friederich Kiesler and László Moholy-Nagy. Both of them had brilliant ideas of leaving the division for auditorium and stage and as a result an audience could be a part of the spectacle thanks to hanging bridges and mechanisms which allow the change of viewing position.

Kiesler's project of Endless Theatre (1916-1926) captured the elaborate configurations of ramps, lifts and bridges, all inside the surprising enormity of

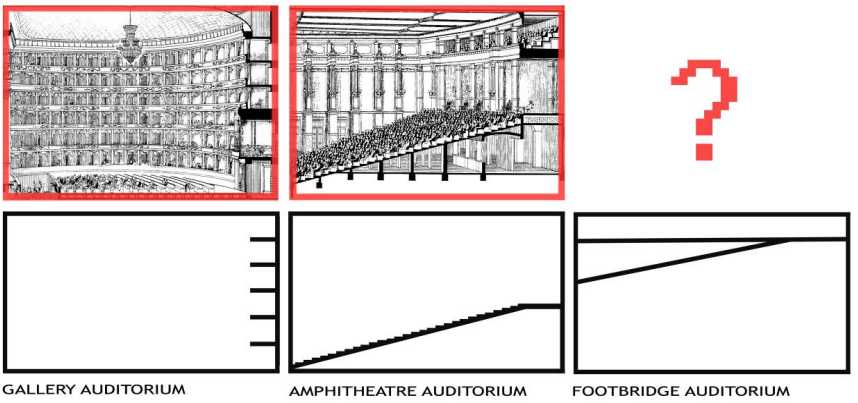

Figure 5. Each of three types of auditorium models a different part of the architectural interior of the theatre. I am still in the process of searching for a good example of the footbridge auditorium

open space for performers and viewers. Unfortunately, he did not prepare any spatial project, only three enigmatic drawings.

Moholy-Nagy left a few of spiral spatial compositions like Kinetic Constructive System (1922-1928) which were supposed to activate to use our kinaesthetic sense. This construction consisted of a conical structure of three ramps which were rising up as spirals and the lifts which facilitated the viewer going up and down. Even if both of them had basically the utopian idea, in my opinion, they could bring a new form for theatrical architecture in which the space between the viewer and performer is unified due to the usage of new technology and materials. Also, auditorium, as a public part of theatre is going to belong to the city. Its form can acquire the obligation to be in the specific place in the city and in its local spatial structure. My intention is to give a fresh look to the problem of auditorium in its complexity. To sum up, I believe that footbridge auditorium could be the most suitable type of auditorium for a contemporary viewer.

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SCENOGRAPHIC SPACES

SCENIC DESIGN AS A FIELD FOR EXPERIMENTATION BY ARCHITECTS: THE SET DESIGNS BY HERZOG & DE MEURON AND MORPHOSIS

NIUXA DRAGO

Introduction

Although in different ways, architecture and scenic design have historically shared investigations into the concept of space, temporal dimensions, illusion, and reality. Whenever science and technology propose new dimensions, it is art that first tries to experiment them and remind us that space and time are constructions that may be re-read and disassembled. Thus, the revision of geometric space, conducted through Einstein's physics and the non-Euclidean geometries, has been incorporated into art, as well as the micro atomic space, where matter and energy converge.

As Foster (2011, p.93) indicated, when analysing the work of Diller, Scofidio + Renfro,

> *Architecture might seem to be extrinsic to such topics, dear as they are to postmodernist art, but, pace the discourse of "fusion", the interdisciplinary thrust of these projects is first to suggest that architecture is always already present somehow – as unseen setting or frame – and then to disrupt this normative use of architecture with a critical intervention.*

For some contemporary architects, interest in the performance of bodies and, therefore, in stage performances is growing, and has provided theatre audiences with experimental scenic devices that address issues which go beyond stage convention. The set designs analysed herein were produced by different theatre companies, but what they have in common, besides being for performances during the first decade of the twenty-first century, is that those responsible for their production sought architects in order to create them, since they recognised conceptual research in their works that would collaborate with the scenic performance. Through its characteristic as an "essay of space", scenography, in a certain manner, enables "isolated" phenomenological experiments. The Italian stage, with controllable qualities of light, sound and visibility, functions as a kind of "test tube" for architects interested in the essential phenomenon of space, body and movement.

Here, we use scientific language terms for two reasons. First, we draw a comparison between the Italian stage and a scientific laboratory, which seeks to reproduce "standard temperature and pressure (STP)", in order to make the results of the experiment universally valid, within the standards stipulated by the scientific community, so that it may be repeated by other scientists. Likewise, the Italian stage has certain characteristics that make it possible to transfer a performance from one stage to another while maintaining some degree of uniformity. Second, but no less important, we believe that it is this quality that establishes the desire for architects to experiment on the stage with devices and concepts similar to those with which they work in the architectural field. The possibility of controlling lighting, sound and even pressure qualities (as revealed by the set for Tristan und Isolde, which we analyse herein), thereby fixing the attention of the audience in order to control almost entirely the image to be created, is an opportunity of experimentation, since such conditions are but predictable when dealing with architectural objects. Architecture is exposed to the weather, to the inconstancy of natural lighting, to interference from the lights and sounds of its surroundings, to the appropriation of spaces according

of to the decisions taken by the user, which thereby change the way of both approaching and walking through the object. Ultimately, architects have little control over the images that will be generated from their architecture. In the cases we analyse, the visual cues of the stage go beyond the scenic code to refer to aspects such as texture, topology, and spatial geometry. Brejzek indicated that in the theatre work of these *'architects-scenographers'*, attention is focused upon a single device (Brejzek, 2017, p.63), and we believe that this is in order to force us to plunge into the reflection implicit in its effect.

Herzog & De Meuron

The Swiss architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre De Meuron graduated from the Zurich Polytechnic Institute and, in the 1980s, began to act professionally. Their intention was to discover in art, mainly in the stream of minimalism, the inspiration to develop their projects. The two architects were involved with Joseph Beuys and the artists of the minimalist movement from which a significant part of their conceptual behaviour originated.

Minimalism seeks an aesthetic impact in the physical qualities of the work (scale, material, spatiality), instead of investing in metaphors or rational reading. For Foster (2011, p.XI-XII), with this aim, Herzog & De Meuron began from a "formal reductivism", so that the object could not be read as a composition, but rather as a totality (or series). Their greatest interest lay in the tension between the literalness of the geometric form and the phenomenal effects. Herzog & De Meuron stated that they proposed an architecture that had the ability to affect people first physically and emotionally before they are intellectually aware of what is happening (Zaera-Polo, 2016). To accomplish this, they sought to explore the material "before the image". Hence its "volumetry" is almost always a single prism, a gesture that W. Wang calls "megatectonic": *'Dialogically oscillating between factual tectonics and megatectonics, between material reality and the great structural gesture, (…) They chase the paradoxical effect produced by the*

strict forms and the articulated materials' (Wang, 2000, p.12)[1].
Their first outstanding project, the warehouse for the Ricola industrial complex in Laufen (1986), is a clear manifesto of this method of work:

> *Whatever material we use to make a building, we are basically interested in finding a specific encounter between construction and material. The material is there to define the building, but equally, the building is destined to render the material "visible". (…) we convey the material we use towards an extreme, in order to show that it is completely independent of any function other than that of "being".* (in Zaera-Polo, 2016, p.104)

Generally, in the works of Herzog & De Meuron, they state that *'the materials enable the appearance of form and help define the structure'*. Undoubtedly, this is not a random choice of material, but is rather suggested by the architectural problem. The two architects emphasize that the material, whether *in natura* or industrialized, besides an external form, also possesses a visible form, an internal structure, invisible, but determinant. From the beginning of their careers, they were interested in the relationships that may be established between these invisible structures and the image, as well as social behaviour or human psychology. One method they describe as *'a search for codes that adapt both natural and cultural information'* (idem, p.83). This concern resulted in the manifesto-text "The Hidden Geometry of Nature" (1989).

Tristan und Isolde **and** ***Attila***

'(...) the invention of a new material addressed a specific architecture. It would not be easy, therefore, to extrapolate the invention elsewhere'. This sentence by Rafael Moneo (2004, p.366) on the work of the architects is valid for the set designs in 2006 for *Tristan und Isolde* at the Berlin Opera, directed by Stefan

[1] This and all non-English citations hereafter have been translated by the author.

Bachmann. After months of attempts, a mechanism was finally achieved of a negative pressure chamber that enabled a rubber membrane to be moulded onto different backgrounds, realizing the conception of Herzog & De Meuron: *'The stage sets and the staging would not represent the things themselves but rather their appearances. (…) that were constantly changing, breathing, imperceptibly overlapping, fading in and fading out. With the addition of precision lighting, these appearances acquired an almost hallucinatory effect'*[2].

The device makes us intuit the material without guiding us towards it, although the light-texture sensation comes first, before the image-appearance that informs the scenery (*'The appearance of the hull of a ship, stairs, a cave or part of a body, a concrete form and identity, and the appearance of emptiness, of nothing, of a zero space*). Material intuition "informs" something, and then misinforms. The effect reminds us of the architects interest in the microscopic invisibility of materials and the substitution of determinism for probabilistic predictability, which describes the essential nature of particles, between energy and matter. The solid condition disappears, although this achievement is due to the material texture or, rather, due to our desire for the material that insinuates, but does not materialize. Rafael Moneo describes this same sensation when analysing the office building also created for Ricola in 1999, where the effect is achieved using glass:

> *(...) The volume virtually dissolves with the superposition of images in an infinite play of reflections, rendering impossible any reading that might understand the building as a static reality. The image multiplies and dissolves, and the architects seem to be interested not so much in the values accompanying a world of presumably impenetrable solids, as in the values that are present in the virtual and atmospheric spaces to which the systems of voids have accustomed us.* (Moneo, 2004, p.402)

[2] This and the following excerpts from the architects themselves, when not referenced, were taken from the official websites of Herzog & De Meuron (https://www.herzogdemeuron.com) and Morphosis (Morphopedia – https://www.morphosis.com).

The membrane created for *Tristan und Isolde*, rather like the works of Christo and Jeanne-Claude, sharpens our curiosity about the image by hiding it, and revives the perception of matter when it reveals its qualities of volume, texture and shadow, still perceptible under the skin. The membrane, when applied to architecture, proposes the resumption of something lost in the passage from the traditional façade to the contemporary screen. For Scoffier (2009), it recaptures a sense of interiority and exteriority, which modernism intended to snatch away in a universal isotropic space, revealing, while at the same time hiding, the interior, in a game of seduction that summons our imagination.

The duo, in the 1990s, arrived at techniques that brought into question both the planarity and the depth, screen printing images on glass, as well as printing relief images on concrete blocks. These techniques, invented by the two architects during their research on screen and texture, textile and three-dimensional qualities, transparency and reflection, possibly originated from their observation of ornamental patterns. Pierre Herzog noted his perception on the Alhambra Palace: *'the illusion of a plane instead of space, or of a trellis in front of the infinite space. Surface-stone (mundane, heavy) becomes clothing (textile, immaterial)'* (Apud Melo, 2002, p.55). In *Tristan und Isolde*, the membrane is sometimes lit from behind, becoming a transparent screen revealing the profile of the materials, and is sometimes lit from the front when stressing the materials, revealing their texture. This ambiguity between texture and screen, materiality and image is a very important issue in our relationship with the contemporary world.

This is because we are constantly confronted by luminous images, created not only to transmit information to be processed rationally, but also to reach our senses. The ability of these images to make our organism react, to reach our senses of touch, smell and taste, involving our body, is part of its success in generating meaning and filling our existence. Similarly, our own perception is being transformed. The imbrications between the physical presence and the virtual image are increasingly explored, both by artists and by our own feelings. The idea of dematerialization, pursued by many architects since the dialogue

Figure 1. Herzog & De Meuron. *Caja Forum* in Madrid (2007). The image shows the contrast between vast planes of vegetation and construction materials. Photo: Júlia Martinelli (PIBIAC – FAU – UFRJ). August 2021

between matter and image proved to be irrefutable, is an expensive topic, and was successfully developed by Herzog & De Meuron.

For the set designs of *Attila*, at the Metropolitan Opera House in New York, led by Pierre Audi in 2010, the architects designed two devices that worked in contrast.

In the prologue, the mountains are represented by concrete rubble, with smaller pieces below and large slabs above. In the other acts, the forest around Rome is a "cloth" of leaves that covers the entire scene, from floor to ceiling, in a dense texture with holes for the characters to appear through. Here, the duo abolished "form" so that the focus fell on the qualities of materials that, in contrast, followed the main theme of destruction and rebirth.

If the polystyrene mountain transmitted weight and indicated that the image and the material had become increasingly closer, they did so in the opposite direction of the gabion walls of the Dominus Winery, where the spaces between

Figure 2. Herzog & De Meuron. Library of University of Applied Sciences in Eberswalde (1999). The image shows the effect of "textilization" of glass and concrete. Photo: Immanuel Giel (August/2005) [CC BY-SA (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/)] source: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:FH-Eberswalde_Bibliothek_Fassade.jpg (downloaded on 1/4/2020)

the "real" stones caused them "to float", thereby betraying the ontological meaning of the material. The curtain of leaves, in turn, leads us to a direct parallel with the Vertical Garden of the Caja de Madrid (2007), where it provoked the same contrast and, less directly, with the Ricola pavilion (1993) and its polycarbonate façade applied with images of a leaf. Repeated hundreds of times, the leaf becomes a sign like those of Pop Art, going from image to texture. The silk-screened glass created by Herzog & De Meuron did not allow itself to be imprisoned. It is almost impossible to comprehend the matter of their mutant surfaces. The material deceived the eye and played with our perceptions, which journeyed between surface and depth, and between the leaf design and the transparency of the glass. *'They apply its idioms cannily: often they use serial units in such a way that material and image are all but conflated, sometimes with materials deployed as images and sometimes the reverse'* (Foster, 2011, p.123).

For Herzog & De Meuron, *'[glass] is as solid and stable as stone or concrete. In*

opposite, by printing on concrete, it suddenly becomes porous or shiny like glass' (Apud Foster, 2011, p.263 [32]). Here, the duo presented a theatrical posture with regard to the materials, in a somewhat baroque fashion. No longer the rational mechanism of illusion that confronted the two-dimensional surface installing an illusion of three-dimensionality, but a phenomenal mechanism by which a tactile material surface was confronted with an image that destroyed its reality. An architectural experience that perfectly symbolized the contemporary precedence of the gaze and the creation of a purely visual world.

The Silent Collisions of Morphosis

Thom Mayne is the principal founding architect of the California studio Morphosis, created in 1972, which defines itself on its website as *'a dynamic and evolving practice that responds to the shifting and advancing social, cultural, political and technological conditions of modern life'*. In defining the studio as a 'dynamic and evolving practice', the collective highlights its interest in movement and transformation, not only of professional practice, but of the objects generated in this practice. Hence Morphosis embraces projects of installations and exhibition spaces, understanding architecture as an expanded field. On being invited to build the exhibition stand that would receive Vecta chairs at a large New York showroom in 1989, Morphosis applied its unpragmatic reflections. Instead of highlighting the products, they placed them in luminescent boxes with small cracks through which the viewer could glimpse parts of only 6 chairs (each "hidden" inside a cube), chosen from dozens that the company intended to expose. The luminous cubes, suspended from the floor, formed a small maze through which visitors searched for cracks that could reveal the objects exposed inside. The exposed object, traditionally *on* the cube, was now *inside* it. The purpose of the collective was, in his own words, *'to create interest through mystification by hiding the chairs within an object'* (Apud Cook & Rand, 1989, p.217). The device emphasized the formal quality of the object, rather than its utilitarian value, because it instigated curiosity and proposed new views on it, both

displacing our perspective (since chairs, in general, appear standing on the floor) and fragmenting its image. At the same time, it illustrated the interest in displacements, fragments and concealments, revealed by Thom Mayne:

> *Our work concretizes the ephemerity of feeling. It transcribes the complexities of the world and the fragmented, disbursed, and detached nature of existence. Our interest in indeterminacy parallels our interest in formal language. Our work reiterates the unfinished nature of things. We hope it unmasks the deceptions of first appearance and explores what we don't see.* (Idem, p.7)

In 1999, the collective, headed by architect Ursula Schumaker, designed the expography of *Silent Collisions*, a model exhibit of Morphosis itself at the Netherlands Institute of Architecture in Rotterdam (NAI). Within an ideally "neutral" exhibition room, with balanced dimensions, high, warp ceilings, and closed to the outside environment, the collective created two layers of light: traditional expographic lighting, focusing directly onto the exposed models and planks, and above this, a second layer which, attached to the ceilings, passed through a device installed as a second translucent cover, creating discrete variations of light in the environment.

The device, made up of triangular and trapezoidal planes hanging from the warp, covering almost the entire area of the room, resembled a translucent roof of many pitches, and moved very slowly, changing its angles and opening cracks, transforming and promoting almost imperceptible changes in the exhibition environment. Thus, it simulated solar incidence, such an essential component in the appreciation of architecture but which is often overlooked. In an exhibition on architecture, Morphosis reminded us, phenomenologically, of the importance of light and of its long duration in contemplating the architectural object.

According to the Morphosis website description, the devise is *'an abstract timepiece'*. On the mezzanine floor of the gallery, the architects positioned a chair so that the device could also be admired, like a 1:1 model (or, as the

project memorial states, *'a transformation of space at a one-to-one scale'*), which completed its cycle every hour. It was thus exposed in the superposition of a dynamic space to a static space (the gallery's ground floor with the traditional exhibitors), a scale of times, or times within times, as one of the intrinsic qualities of architecture and the city. The architects stated that:

> *(…) our experience of the built form changes with light, temperature, and climate over the course of the day, while the physicality of a building itself changes over the course of seasons and years. Reflecting architecture's diurnal transformation, the exhibit structure moved at a nearly imperceptible rate, completing one full cycle in the span of one hour.*

We could draw a parallel between the "performance" of this space and Robert Wilson's goals in works such as *Einstein on the Beach*, of which Salter declared: *'Wilson's slow motion, dreamlike archi-scenography created a performance event no longer dominated by the unfolding of linear clock time or chronos, but instead by tempus – the spectator perceived sense of "lived time"'* (Salter, 2010, p.60). The *Silent Collisions* exhibit project received an award from the American Institute of Architects, and choreographer Frédéric Flamand (Charleroi Dance) envisioned a space to experience the interaction of dancers within the limits of space and light. He invited Morphosis to conceive a performance to be presented at the first Venice Dance Biennial, in 2003, whose theme was precisely 'body-city'.
For the performance created with Morphosis, the idea of the exhibit device was maintained, as well as the title *Silent Collisions*, which translated the relationship of bodies with the space of the city. Flamand's choreography was inspired by Italo Calvino's depictions of imaginary cities in "The Invisible Cities".
Performed at the Teatro alle Tese at the Venetian Arsenal, the choreography was set in a bifrontal scenic space, with the arches of the shed laterally limiting the device and participating in the scenic configuration. Three large planes – each cut into triangular and trapezoidal panels, enabling light to pass between these

fragments – formed a scenic box, a kind of white cube: a plane parallel to each arch and a plane forming the ceiling. The panels were constructed with metal frame and tensioned translucent fabric, to allow the passage of light. Its vertices hung from the warp by a network of cables, as in a great puppet of wires, and could be uneven, gradually dismantling the initial cube and reconfiguring the space with angular and broken shapes. *'Flamand orchestrated projections of text and images as place markers, as virtual dancers, and as literal references to the contemporary mode of navigating the world (the internet)'* (Weinstein, 2008, p.30). According to the memorial of the stage set project, *'Space and dancer become singular in this four-dimensional space of fixed and kinetic levels, breaks, inclined planes, and undulations'*. Both elements – space and dancer – moved, sometimes dictating, sometimes following the movement of the other. The architects were proud to offer the choreographer *'the tool to operate on the performance environment, to choreograph not only the dancers but also the space'*. Thus, both choreographer and architect sought to create a performance where the dialogue between body and city was represented.

Starting as a white cube, the device acquired 11 different conformations, relative to 11 of the cities imagined by Calvino. Despite the dynamic configurations, the project memorial highlighted the reference to the cube as a kind of "referential regulator" of form: *'As formal and temporal symmetry device, the structure starts and ends as a platonic form - a cube. Throughout the performance, the planes of the cube fold up or down to animate the environment'*.

This short excerpt serves as an important key for reading some architectural projects of the collective. We may analyse two designs of educational buildings conceived around the time of the *Silent Collisions* sets. Diamond Ranch High School, a 1996 project that opened in 1999, was one of the most important by Morphosis. This was a set of school units, linked by a central avenue that was implanted diagonally within the place. The fragmentation and deformations of the volumes, according to the architects, were inspired by the 'jagged and inherently unstable forms of the Los Angeles foothills' but this relation to context was not as striking

Figure 3. Morphosis Architecture, with Gruzen Samton as associate architect. Cooper Union New Academic Building, Cooper Square, New York City (2009). The image shows the transformation of a cube block. Photo: short.dale [CC0] (April 2011) source: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:CooperunionNAB.jpg (downloaded on 1/4/2020)

as the still-present reminder of the regular prisms that gave origin to the volumes. We may also say the same about one of Morphosis' most controversial projects, the new headquarters of the Cooper Union School of New York, conceived in 2006 and completed in 2009[3]. Here, once again, the origin of the object is clear and the starting point of the design process may be referred to as a parallelepiped derived from the complete occupation of the New York block. The regularity of the volume is broken by an expansive movement that comes from the inside and corresponds to the prism of the stairs, a place of coexistence with irregular flights and catwalks that expand to "crack" the cube and open

[3] The controversy surrounding the project concerned the high building costs that the school had to deal with, which, coinciding with the great US crisis of 2008, consumed the funds left by the founder Peter Cooper. This led the institution, which had been free for 150 years, to start charging for tuition. Andrew Rossi's *Ivory Tower* documentary, winner of the 2014 Sundance Festival, questioned the need to build the new headquarters and showed the Free Cooper Union movement. Membership of the movement included those such as Barack Obama, who mediated the board's agreement with the students who occupied the school's headquarters in 2013.

the view to the inner community nucleus from the front facade or, according to the project's memorial, *'connecting the creative and social heart of the building with the street'*. The fragmentation of the object remained at a distance from the formal origin, short enough to allow us to go back to the cube and thus recreate the dynamics of transformation in our imagination. The image of the cube allows us to revisit the formal symmetry and, also, the original moment that initiated the procedural conception or, in other words, the action of the transforming forces that generated the final object. These forces, visible and active in the choreographic spectacle, can only be intuited into the architectural object. The architect, however, does not give up on bringing the architecture of these qualities closer to performance.

The *Silent Collisions* installation/set participated in a collection of 1:1 models that, since the 1960s, has gained importance and, according to Brejzek and Wallen (2018), became the big stars of the 1980s at the two largest international architectural events on architecture and scenography: The Venice Architecture Biennale and the Prague Quadrennial. For the authors, the 1:1 models were neither representational nor iterative, but autonomous, i.e., they have established a conceptually significant spatial experience themselves and reach the observer with its immersive power:

> *At such scales, the model created for the exhibition becomes an experiential interior space and volume, rendering it both performative and autonomous. Beyond the mere representative display, it is constructed increasingly for exhibition alone, asserting its autonomous status as a cosmopoietic or world-making physical object or environment.* (Brejzek et Wallen, 2018, p.133)

In the lyrical installation project *Snow Show*, for the 2004 outdoor winter exhibition in Rovaniemi, Finland, Morphosis used qualities of water to create a "performative" architecture. Three months before construction, capsules of red antifreeze liquid were sunk into a lake. When the lake froze over, the ice

blocks were extracted, some of them with capsules inside. In the built pavilion, also a 1:1 model, solid blocks immediately contrasted entirely with others that were kept inside the red fluid. At another "time" transposed by the installation, however, it was possible to observe the mutation of the whole object, both by enhancing the light effects on ice surfaces, and by transforming the states of water. The installation reaffirmed the collective's interest in concepts involving time, manifested by light, natural cycles, and cube transformations. According to Morphosis,

> *As our NAI exhibit challenged viewers to perceive the diurnal passage of biological time, this project provokes its audience to examine the making process over the course of seasonal time (…) This process, with its biological timeline and resultant experimental structure, are inextricably connected to ideas about nature, the progression of time, entropy, and the life cycles that pervade our body of more fixed, permanent work.*

Conclusion

A recurring fact in the history of theatre is that the absence of the initial dramatic text induces a less illustrative and more suggestive scenography, as evidenced by the spatial evolutions arising from the partnerships between Gordon Craig and Isadora Duncan, and Adolphe Appia and Jacques-Dalcroze (Goldberg, 2015)[4]. What we see here is that the architects used the movement of bodies (choreography) or of sound (opera) to create a space or image.

In the case of the operas, Herzog & De Meuron used the texture of materials to refer to the texture of sounds. A texture that is not always felt directly. In *Tristan und Isolde*, the texture was told by light. The technique had a strong effect,

[4] Figurative sets, of course, also show suggestibility and are, to some extent, open to interpretation. However, here we refer to the tradition inherited from the symbolism of Appia and Craig, that which uses few volumetric elements exactly to increase its suggestibility and also allows the rapid changes of image, under lighting effects, following the movement of music and dance.

as it realized the material abstraction in which the music was conceived. The continuity in which the images were mounted and unmounted was the visible parallel of the invisible structure of the notes, which ran towards a harmonic "attractor" and, when they converges, materialized into full realization. In *Attila*, the textile quality emanating from the texture of the material was intended to accompany the texture of the music and reinforced its perception. By giving up decisive forms, the duo submitted the visual space to the sound space.

We understand that in the strategy of postmodern art, integrating the flow of time seems more effective than trying to hold it up. David Harvey (1992), analysing the postmodern condition, reminded us that while social theories focus on temporal changes, aesthetic theories usually investigate the communication of values in a frozen spatial order. Harvey wondered how aesthetic practices, which are spatializations, are able to communicate flow and change when these become essential values. He admitted the protagonist effect of music and cinema in postmodernity and emphasized that the dilemma is especially serious for Architecture. *'How could architecture be proposed as an evolutionary process rather than a fixed entity in time and space?'* (Mayne apud Weinstein, 2008, p.30). This is the question that Thom Mayne seeks to answer when he draws our attention to the time of the sun on architecture, or when he proposes to formally trace the transformation of the cube.

Therefore, it does not seem strange that the architects approach performance – especially dance (choreography) and music (opera) – which are rooted in the flow of time, to try, once again, to dominate it. Essentially, as Harvey tells us, quoting Elliot, *'Only through time, time is conquered'.*

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THE HOURS: THE (FE)MALE GAZE?

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Introduction

Our aim is to show that the literary convention (*renowned midday topos*) is translatable to the text of a moving image using the grammatical code and sign constructs of film text (Wollen, 1984) present in Virginia Woolf's novel (*Mrs. Dalloway* – 1996[1]). There, the convention in question is used in its most classical sense, in writing, and in the literary use of space, light, colours and movement. Adapted from Virginia Woolf's novel, Michael Cunningham's text *The Hours* (1998) maintains the classicism of the convention. However, the film *The Hours* (2002) suggests the affirmation of this same classicism but reverses the terms: underlying danger is transformed into a possibility of salvation and auspicious events, of the preservation of the soul, even if through death. Similar to the two literary texts on which it is based, the film employs the same elements (space, light, colours, and movement) to which we might add the scenography design (framework by opposing interior/women and exterior/men), framing emphasizing the *field* and the *off-field*, the *mise-en-scène*, and the soundtrack.

[1] *Mrs Dalloway* had its first edition on May 14, 1925, edited by Hogarth Press (owned by Virginia and Leonard Woolf), with cover art by Vanessa Bell; the first edition in Portuguese came to print in 1982, translated by Ricardo Alberty, edited by Ulisseia, we have used the 1996 edition, ed. Penguin Books.

The Midday Topos or *Noonscape*

The midday topos or noonscape are conventions of classical literature, reborn with modernism, which relate to the solar effects of midday and noontide inducing an event. In the *Odyssey*, Menelaus's encounter with Proteu suggests a good omen (Hoff, 1999). In a more classical use, it indicates danger (Hoff, 1990), as used in *Mrs. Dalloway*. Virginia Woolf's novel addresses the issue of the preservation of the soul, basing its dramatic structure on the hour indicated, throughout the text, by the beating of the various clocks of London, which are used to structure the novel itself, not in chapters, but by marking the hour.

While aware of the danger in *the heat of the sun* (oppressive heat and indolence), the convention suggests a *locus amnoenus*. In the Woolfian text, the character of Clarissa Dalloway's follows the doctor's advice: *"at midday they disrobe"* (Woolf, 1996, p.35). She enters the house but does not realise that by putting the yellow hat on the bed, she is not out of reach of the *hubris* of superstition.

The literary convention of the *midday topos* is expressed in color, time, seclusion, suspension of oneself as regards place and mode of preservation. At noon, the sun stops for an instant, suspending time: it is the moment of abnormality, carelessness, error, madness, perdition, and delirium. It's the time of death or salvation.

The Hours – the novel(s)

According to Virginia Woolf's diaristic work, the novel begins by being named *The Hours*[2] that Michael Cunningham retrieves for his text, paying homage to Woolfian canonical text, *Mrs Dalloway* an account of one day in London – June 23rd, 1923. Having been ill and confined to her attic room for a long period, Clarissa Dalloway leaves that morning – at 10 o'clock, to the sound of Big Ben – to buy the flowers she will wear at the party that same night, in order to

[2] "(…). Pensam com entusiasmo no meu próximo livro, a que eu penso chamar *As Horas*. (…)". [They think enthusiastically of my next novel which I think I'll call *the Hours*] (Woolf, 2018, p.233).

promote the political career of her husband, Richard Dalloway. The splendid morning evokes memories of summer, when, at the age of eighteen, she chose to marry Richard in preference to Peter Walsh, for whom she had strong feelings. That same day, Peter Walsh in London, having returned from India, looks for Clarissa, introducing the *midday topos*. From this meeting, close to the fatal hour, doubts about her choice, about love, aging, identity and about the (un) happiness resulting from choices made throughout her life are renewed. It will be at the end of the day, upon learning of the suicide of the poet crippled in the war and unknown to her, that Clarissa appeases her soul (Wright, 1944). As she goes up to her attic room, seeing the old neighbour next door also climbing the stairs, light in hand, Clarissa resigns herself to the inevitability of being alive, of making choices. Life must be lived (Thakur, 1965).

Cunningham's novel *The Hours* revisits the Woolfian universe, recounting one day, in the year 1923, in Richmond, beginning with the character Virginia writing the book *Mrs Dalloway*, then switching to Los Angeles, in 1951, with the character Laura Brown reading the same novel on the birthday of her husband Dan Brown. The timeframe shifts once again to New York in 2001, to the day of the party in which Clarissa Vaughan (nicknamed Clarissa Dalloway) organizes a party commemorating the lifetime achievement award of the writer Richard Brown.

Through three female characters, in different epochs, but united by the same text, *Mrs Dalloway*, the novel *The Hours*, encompasses three female universes containing the same existential questions as those present in the Woolfian character, leading to three encounters at the fateful hour and the making of three life decisions.

The Hours – the film

The film makes use of a prologue, one might say a false *flashback*, to the suicide of Virginia Woolf and the suicide letter she writes to Leonard Woolf. Immediately it reveals a solution to the existential question which has guided the writing from

its origin – *Mrs Dalloway*, to Michael Cunningham's text, culminating in the film. Contrary to the book adaptation in the form of remediation (Bolter & Grusin, 2000), the film interlocks timeframes as an exercise in postmodern writing (Lyotard, 2003) which interweaves distinct temporalities and distinct dramatic nuclei, as if they were not temporally and spatially distinct, and interweaves three different plots making use of the writing of the mother novel as a dramatic component of union and explanation. It is an exercise in post-modernism, in its revisitation of a canonical text, with a fragmentary structure that values both spatial and temporal discontinuity, celebrating the narration as a consequence of images, apparent themselves, but freeing space for interpretation (Deleuze, 2006, pp.43-44). Film however is not a universal and primitive language, nor itself an actual language, before movements and processes of thought (pre-linguistic images) and views on these movements and processes – pre-signifying signs (Deleuze, 2006, pp.334-335). In this sense, the film experience of *The Hours* is paradigmatic, when it suggests a rupture of meaning and meaning systems, arising from each of the female characters, affirmed in a classic curve in three acts: Virginia, non-conformist; Laura, emancipated; Clarissa Vaughan, liberated.

First Act – Dawn

The film opens with Virginia dressed in brown. A close-up prevents the light from entering the scene, deepening the brown and beige that characterizes her. Through a voiceover we hear Virginia's suicide letter, as she comes into view, with the focus on her hands. Only then is her identity revealed. The light is obscured by darkness – fear – and when she is visible, the brown she wears becomes almost ochre, fulfilling the screen. The character is inside, perpendicular to the dark frame of the doorway. Clearly, in the interior space, the feminine juxtaposes the external space framed by the door which, through glass, allows a glimmer of light to enter – but does not even fulfil the function of lighting: to lighten. When she turns towards the door, the brown of her dress is even more striking,

darkening the interior space.

Virginia heads to the door, but her position and movements indicate the pressure of an obsession, reflected in the way she walks. Symbolizing the bold transition from interior to exterior, the camera draws away from the character, establishing a distanced *mise-en-scène* (interpreted as non-agreement); the camera follows her from a distance. Her brown coated figure blends with the greens of the vegetation and lends itself to a scene mediated by the dramatic weight of the character's *performance*. The light that outside would be expected is lost in this sequence and is already absent when Virginia reaches the River Ouse. From here the waters that appear brownish in unison with the clothes are invaded by grey, as the character enters with the intent of being swallowed up by the river. Submerged, the browns of Virginia's clothes almost fade into the waters, the earth, and the branches that envelop her and drag her inert body down, invoking Ophelia[3]. The prologue ends. The day begins!

The three feminine characters are surrounded by white light, which touches each of them, adjusting to the colors and light that represent them.

The three are seen as faces on their pillow, invoking the Woolfian motif of the hours, but also defining them by solitude: all are married, all wake up alone. The shots of their faces resting on each pillow mark the transition between space and time: Virginia goes to the washbasin, and lowers her face, but it is the washed face of Clarissa Vaughan that rises again, in a profusion of white orchids detailing the *décor*. There immediately follows the face of Laura Brown, linked to the book Mrs Dalloway, immersed in a profusion of greenery and foliage, the colours of which become a dominant scenographic feature in the *poesis*.

The scene defines the colour for each: brown for Virginia, white for Clarissa and green for Laura Brown. Similarly, the first act defines the dramatic structure. The women belong to the domestic interior. Introspection is reserved for the

[3] We refer to the work of Sir John Everett Millais – *Ophelia*, 1852, which represents the character Ophelia of the Shakespearean text *Hamlet*.

bedroom (each faces resting on its pillow), while in domestic life they lose their sense of self, being bound to their domestic routine. Clarissa leaves the flat to buy flowers, but we only see her briefly in public: we see her enter the florist's; we see her enter Richard's building; we see her in the hospital. Her presence outside is fleeting.

We see Virginia going for a walk, with Leonard's permission, but without enjoyment: she is immersed in the novel she is about to write. The three female figures are portrayed in a context that distinguishes them from the male characters. The men (with the exception of Richard Brown, the poet) make their entrance through the front, from the left to the right-hand side. The lighting and the rapidity of their movements are a metaphor for their freedom. Together with the men, two secondary female figures are treated in the same way. Clarissa's companion Sally and her daughter, Julia, represent two different forms of emancipation: the former is an affirmation of her own will and is granted a certain masculinity even in the way she dresses; the latter displays the emancipation representative of her generation. Both are allowed a touch of red in the clothing they wear, perhaps concealing a bold, doomed figure.

Notably, the canonically feminine characters remain in the space of domesticity, although each responds differently: Virginia is terrified of the maids; Laura feels uncomfortable at home because she feels uncomfortable in her role as wife, mother and housewife; Clarissa embraces two houses: her own and Richard's. Such a reading is expressed in the setting in which we find each of them: mostly standing, rarely seated, but in any of the situations framed by doorways (either interior, or at the front door), or in a window bay. The female protagonists Daldry chose to frame. The male (or masculinized) characters he attributes with the movement of entering from the exterior to the interior, in tracking shots which emphasize this movement as a sign of transgression. This language excludes the character of Richard Brown, whom we witness mostly seated, an integral part of the house, the exterior of which is only revealed when, sitting on the window sill, he drops into the light, to his death.

Second act – Midday, the yellow hour – of the non-removal of the hubris

In a warmer light now, at noon, the three women are exposed to danger and obliged to reflect on their choices, their life, their quest for happiness. Virginia is visited by Nessa (her sister) and her nephews. We witness her reflection on death, when her niece finds a dead bird, whose grave will be adorned with the yellow roses Virginia was carrying. With her face to the ground, reclining by the bird, Virginia knows that it is necessary to cross the waters when one dies, in an evocation of the Hades River. This is repeated when Clarissa is interrupted by Louis Waters (waters), and also in the case of Laura in the dreamlike scene where she decides not to commit suicide, rising from the waters that have already submerged her. Yellow relates to Laura in the color of the roses that Dan offers her first thing in the morning and which she contemplates before deciding to leave the house and rent a room in a hotel (where she will live out the dilemma caused by her reading) and, in the kitchen, Clarissa has difficulty to separate the yellow egg yolks from the clear whites.

While making a birthday cake for Dan, Laura is interrupted by her neighbour Kitty. She becomes aware that as a married housewife, mother of Richard and pregnant for the second time, she does not have the life she wishes for – she did not make the right choices.

While preparing a meal for the party, Clarissa is interrupted by Louis Waters who questions her obsessive caring for Richard Brown. He confesses to feeling a sense of freedom since separating from Richard[4].

Marked by the presence of yellow in each scene, the three characters are exposed to danger: they reflect on their choices, they reflect on their identity; they reflect on what happiness means to them. The three are aware of being alive.

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[4] "CLARISSA – anyway, it doesn't matter. It was you he stayed with. It was you he lived with. You'll see when he comes. He's still Richard. His mind wanders and he's in a lot of pain. But there's some constant quality. There's his Richard-ness.
LOUIS moves towards her, careful about what he wants to spell out.
LOUIS – The day I left him I got on a train and made my way across Europe. I felt free for the first time in years" (Hare, 2002, p.70).

All three are conscious of their unhappiness. They know that to be alive is to make choices.

Third act – Late afternoon

Virginia takes the risk of leaving her home. We encounter her on the platform at Richmond station. She wants to go back to London, but Leonard arrives and confronts her. In the heat of their argument the lighting is such that it accentuates the dominant browns; even Leonard seems impregnated by this colour.

In extremis, Laura postpones her decision to commit suicide. We see her at home with her son at her husband Dan's birthday dinner. Again, the lighting is sombre. After the semi-darkness of dinner, in conversation with Dan, the scene is again framed by doorways – Laura inside the bathroom, Dan outside. She is in shadow, while he is illuminated by the artificial light of the bedroom, the doorway between them. He asks her if she is coming to bed – she lies that she's just finishing brushing her teeth. What will her choice be – to resign herself or continue in her search for happiness?

The framing of female figures in doorways, in confined spaces, is most noticeable in Clarissa's scenes, most markedly in the shots of the deep elevator shaft in Richard Brown's building. Clarissa helps Richard prepare for the party. The narrative here relies on the intensity of the shots, in the absolute black of the elevator, at the entrance to Richard's chaotic house. The white for Clarissa's character appears as a huge plastic bag that she uses to collect the garbage scattered around the house, in sharp contrast to the darkness caused by the pieces of cloth that cover the windows. By trying to clear the windows, so that light can enter, Clarissa reverses the structure of the windows as feminine language. Sitting on the window sill, Richard states that keeping him alive is the only *raison d'être* she has in her life, and asks her to repeat how she went to buy flowers in the morning (an allusion to the Woolfian text – "Mrs. Dalloway said she would buy the flowers herself"), recalling that they were in love at the age of

eighteen. Separated now, just friends, that's what life is all about. We stay alive because of others; we make choices. That's being alive. But is it what it means to be happy?

Climax followed by resolution – Night followed by dawn

Returning to the interior, to semi-darkness, to brown tones, Virginia informs Leonard that she has made a decision: the character of her new novel, the poet, must die so that others can live.

On the window still, Richard informs Clarissa that she will have to find a reason to live beyond keeping him alive. He lets himself fall from the window into the precipice as a silent scream that releases (her?) him through suicide.

Emphasizing the night and the interior décor, and reiterating the framework of the doorways, we learn that Laura is Richard Brown's mother, and that she decided to wait for her daughter to be born before leaving her family and getting a job as a librarian in Canada. As for Virginia, we know at the outset, from the prologue, that she committed suicide in the dark waters of the River Ouse.

Conclusion: *The Hours – the fe(male) gaze*?

The women portrayed here are confined to the domestic sphere. Whether it be 1923, 1951 or 2001, they remain walled in the interior space and almost identified with the door frames that support joists, mortar and stucco. The doors define a borderline within which the women are confined to a non-place they yearn to escape from and are prevented from having a life of their own (Porto, 1947).

Although linked to writing, they have no voice of their own and depend on male or masculinized figures such as Sally, Clarissa's companion. At a time of winning the suffragette vote, at a time of the post-war boom and at a time which survived the millennial bug of 2000, all of these women, the protagonists, are slaves to the social roles from which they cannot free themselves.

Virginia crosses the private space twice: chronologically, to seek inspiration by

going for a walk, but not without Leonard's permission; on the second occasion she leaves of her own will, to commit suicide, a step that she dares to take in a single moment of freedom, which also coincides with the annulment of his voice in the exercise of writing.

Laura crosses the private space once: to decide on her life. Pregnant, she remains a woman, wife and mother, in accordance with her social status. Only after the birth of her daughter she allowed herself to find a profession and gain her independence. But, as a librarian, she becomes guardian to the writing of others and mother of a renowned poet – Richard Brown.

Clarissa Vaughan has financial and professional autonomy, but she is the editor of someone else's writing. Her choice in life is to be the perfect hostess (Thakur, 1965). Apparently free to decide to abandon a heterosexual relationship, Clarissa finally meets Sally, a deeply masculinized female figure and within the canon of socially accepted behavior for men (she arrives alone at dawn, Clarissa being careful to have left a light on).

To whom then is granted the female gaze? Julia! Clarissa's daughter moves in the private and public sphere in an assertive way typical of those who know how to assume their choices and make themselves a promise of the future for women today. In Julia lies the threshold of hope for professional fulfilment, ensuring subsistence and freedom!

Three women protagonists, the architecture of three men: Daldry, Hare, Glass. And yet, the three women do not come to light through the male gaze (Mulvey, 1989). In short, six points of view capable of androgyny of mind and word: of life?

The Hours is the inexorable passage of time, which can be translated as the exhaustion of life itself, materialized by London clocks, reducing life to an equation in both writing and film, and translating life (also into a metaphor) by those hours, so discreet that only the last moment is perceived. Life's options are chosen, marked by blocks that are rites of passage, socially determined and sublimally accepted, without perceiving the real importance of the moment –

the tiniest fragment of time that decision requires, which defines the decision to rescue one's own life. Just as happiness does not begin – it is the happiness of each instant; life does not begin – it is the happiness of each instant derived from a fabric of choices. The instant is the breath of life which assumes the *midday topos* as light or darkness, perdition or salvation. The answer to the final question is left to the reader. *The Hours* – Can it be *the fe(male) gaze*?

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GIULIO CAMILLO: SCENOGRAPHER OF MEMORY IN A DRAMATIC ARCHITECTURE

CAROLINA E. SANTO

The art of memory is a technique of European tradition inherited from ancient Greece, commonly used by Roman orators and passed on to the following generations. Whoever desired to train their faculty of memorisation learned to place images of strong impact – *imagenes agentes*[1] – in rooms of a virtual architecture. They could then walk around this virtual building, enter the rooms, and visualize the images that would stimulate their memory. This spatial technique, known as the *Palace of Memory*, allows one to move virtually from one room to another, and consequently from one idea to another without becoming disoriented in one's speech.

The printing industry in the Renaissance could have eradicated this kind of artificial memory technique; paradoxically, this is when *Ars Memoria* reached

[1] Definition of Imagenes agentes in *Rhetorica Ad Herennium* 'We ought, then, to set up images of a kind that can adhere longest in memory. And we shall do so if we establish similitudes as striking as possible; if we set up images that are not many or vague but active (imagines agentes); if we assign to them exceptional beauty or singular ugliness; if we ornament some of them, as with crowns or purple cloaks, so that the similitude may be more distinct to us; or if we somehow disfigure them, as by introducing one stained with blood or soiled with mud or smeared with red paint, so that its form is more striking, or by assigning certain comic effects to our images, for that, too, will ensure our remembering them more readily. The things we easily remember when they are real, we likewise remember without difficulty when they are figments. But this will be essential-again and again to run over rapidly in the mind all the original places in order to refresh the images'.

its peak with a profusion of machines, systems and techniques invented to improve the capacity of learning. One man stood out from this profusion of inventions. His name was Giulio Camillo and he offered to build a universal memory system containing all the knowledge of the world in the shape of a small wooden theatre.

This paper proposes to look at Giulio Camillo as a scenographer of memory, to examine his reasons for choosing the architecture of a theatre, what this architecture was like in the Renaissance and what it meant. Here, the theatre is not only used as a system but as a dramatic architecture in which the spectator, or in this case, the user, becomes a performer who creates, imagines, remembers and embodies knowledge.

Historical Landmarks

The Renaissance is marked by the rediscovery of ancient Greek and Latin texts (Cicero, Plato and Aristotle) and the rebirth of the ancient classical arts, sciences and philosophy. The modern perspective techniques revolutionize the arts but also the way that people look at the world. On another level, Copernicus heliocentric theory is reconfiguring the universe, opening thought for even deeper spatial questionings. The renaissance humanist questions the position of the sun in relation to the earth but also his/her own place in relation to god and the universe. These are times of profound questionings related to place, emplacements and viewpoints. In that sense, the Renaissance is embedded in a scenographic rationale "that redefines the world through new place orientations" (Hann, 2018).

The Renaissance world is highly codified. It is organized and orchestrated according to certain principles and laws. The capacity to learn and memorize, becomes an important asset, promoting a powerful position in society. At this time, Venice is known for its publishers who distributed their editions all across Europe. The city was an important intellectual centre of the Renaissance and Giulio Camillo was a man of his time.

Born in Friuli, in the North East of Italy, around 1480, Camillo later lived in the region of Venice where he studied philosophy and jurisprudence at the University of Padua, and taught eloquence and logic at San Vito. Between 1521 and 1525, he held a chair of dialectics at the University of Bologna. Considered as a genius by some and as a perjurer by others, his charismatic personality did not go unnoticed. Lina Bolzoni described him as *'a scholar and philosopher, both a Friulan and a cosmopolitan, a master of rhetoric, a fat man with a stutter who nevertheless knew how to fascinate his audience*' (Bolzoni, 2005, p.8, author's translation). Camillo had many illustrious acquaintances, such as the publisher Aldus Manutius[2], the philosopher Erasmus, the painters Titian and Salviati, and the architect Sebastiano Serlio, who was appointed by the King Francis I of France to become the supervisor of the construction and decoration of the Fontainebleau castle. Giulio Camillo made his own way to King Francis I with two manuscripts *Theatro della sapientia, and Trattato dell'imitazione*, and eventually convinced him to finance the construction of a machine that would allow its user to reach the knowledge of the entire universe and access all the treasures of eloquence.

Memory systems and rhetoric machines were very popular across Europe in the Renaissance, but none equalled the success of Camillo's theatre whose structure was based on the study of Vitruvius's theatre plan. Dating from the 1st century BC, Vitruvius's treatise on architecture was printed in Rome in 1486. For almost one century his work was studied by architects and scholars, illustrated and translated from Latin into Italian.

The fifth book of his treatise covers public buildings and is largely concerned with theatre. Renaissance architects such as Andrea Palladio drew theatre plans according to Vitruvius's descriptions (fig. 1). The drawing starts with a circle in which four equilateral triangles are drawn, while two parallel lines on either

[2] Humanist and founder of the Aldine press. He is well known for having invented the *enchiridia*, a small portable book.

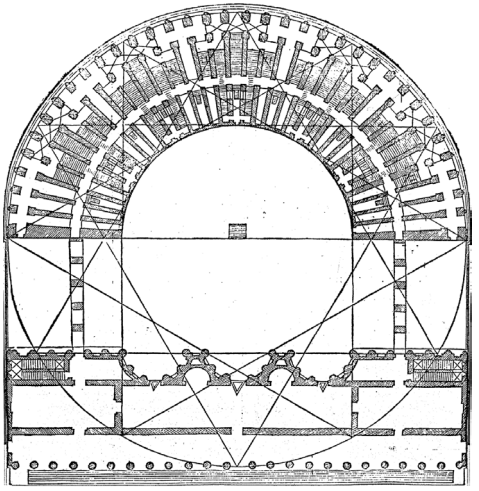

Figure 1. Andrea Palladio. Reconstruction of the plan of a Roman theatre for the edition of Vitruvius's "I Dieci Libri dell' Architettura" translated by Daniele Barbaro (Venice, 1556)

side of the circle determine the positions of the proscenium and the orchestra. The four equilateral triangles also divide the circle via twelve equidistant points that indicate the positions of the seven exits in the auditorium and the five stage entrances. On the stage a palace with a central door and two side doors must be represented. Vitruvius also indicated that the four triangles divide the circle into twelve parts according to the cosmological principles of the twelve signs of the zodiac.

In 1540, Sebastiano Serlio wrote an architecture and perspective treatise[3] based on Vitruvius's writings, and adapted to the Renaissance. The second book is entirely dedicated to theatre architecture. What he proposes is not an archaeological reconstitution, but an adaptation of Vitruvius's Roman theatre for the Italian aristocracy of the Renaissance. The development of perspective techniques has

[3] *All the Works of Architecture and Perspective*.

contributed to the re-organization of the classical Roman theatre with new forms and principles, namely a motionless spectator looking at a framed image constructed by means of perspective, so as to produce a resemblance between the representation and the vision that a spectator can have of reality. The Italian Renaissance theatre is organized around the stage, which is the place of fiction, fable, and knowledge. The Prince has the privilege to have a special place in the audience that dominates the stage. He sits in the focal point[4] right in front of the centre stage. According to the perspective technique, *the Prince's eye* is actually the painter's eye.

The history of theatre architecture teaches us how art and technology seek to express life and thought through matter and form. Theatres reflect the philosophical and scientific thought of their epoch and are also the expression of political power. The circular theatre inherited from Vitruvius and adapted to the Renaissance epitomizes the questionings of its time. If the world is a sphere, what place should I occupy in this sphere, who am I and what does this place mean, what role does it assign to me?

A Theatre for wisdom

French theatre historian and scenographer Anne Surgers (2007) has observed that Renaissance scholars, and artists who reflected on the theories of language and knowledge, also organized staged forms of academic gatherings. These academies often took place in large rectangular halls, but their spatial organization mimicked the theatre. The audience was spread out in such a way as to surround a focal point where the Prince, or the most important person in the audience, was seated in front of a decorum, ideally ordered according to his frontal perspective. This spatial disposition created a mirror effect in which the

[4] *'L'œil du Prince',* which means *'The Prince's Eye',* is a French expression proposed by theatre architect Nicola Sabbatini (1574–1654) to evoke an imaginary point in the audience of a theatre, located in its central axis, where all the objects onstage appear better than from any other place. This place was reserved for the nobility, thus the reference to the prince.

Prince had a pivotal role between the stage where the idea, the speech, or the scientific knowledge was presented, and the audience. This spatial organization placed the Prince in the centre of all attentions as the epicentre of power and that is important for our understanding of Giulio Camillo's theatre of memory. In a speech addressed to the French court, Camillo promoted his theatre as such:

> *If men's mind had a window (as Socrates desired), we would certainly see that innumerable forms of things are imprinted there... I have built a great external mind, a mind that contains the forms of all things and all words, but the natural mind is different from my artificial mind because the former can be triggered by the senses, while my artificial mind commands not only the senses, but also of the inner mind through the senses themselves.* (Camillo in Bolzoni, 2018)

King Francis I became passionate about Camillo's project and granted him an advance payment of 500 ducats to guarantee his own exclusive use of the machine. The theatre of memory thus became a political project. We know that at least one sample of the theatre was built in Italy and another one in Paris, but no material evidence is left from these constructions. In 1544, Camillo died without finishing his masterpiece. However, during the three months prior to his death, he dictated a text describing his project. Published posthumously, *L'Idea del Teatro* is the only remain of the theatre of memory. The original version of the text that contained illustrations by the famous painters Francesco Salviati and Titian, disappeared. It seems to have burned in the fire of the Spanish Escurial Library in 1671. To this day, we believe that only the King of France and Camillo himself knew all the secrets of the system.

The descriptions and writings that have passed on to us from Camillo's theatre leave a wide margin of interpretation concerning its precise architectural form and the scholars who have studied it (Frances Yates, Lina Bolzoni, Bertrand Schefer and Christine de Léotard-Sommer) have often made their own plans of

the building. I will describe some of these plans to make my point, namely, how Camillo designed his memory system into a theatre architecture to be used as a performative tool where the spectator becomes an active participant, a user, a performer.

The theatre was circular, and made of wood. The interior resembled the architecture of the Roman Theatre, with the difference that it was intended for a solo spectator standing onstage and looking at the 'spectacle' in the auditorium. A letter dated 1532 addressed to Erasmus and attributed to Viglius Zuichemus describes the theatre as follows:

> *The work is of wood, marked with many images, and full of little boxes; there are various orders and grades in it. He gives a place to each individual figure and ornament, and he showed me such a mass of papers that, though I always heard that Cicero was the fountain of richest eloquence, scarcely would I have thought that one author could contain so much or that so many volumes could be pieced together out of his writings. He calls this theatre of his by many names, saying now that it is a built or constructed mind and soul, and now that it is a windowed one. He pretends that all things that the human mind can conceive and which we cannot see with the corporeal eye, after being collected together by diligent meditation may be expressed by certain corporeal signs in such a way that the beholder may at once perceive with his eyes everything that is otherwise hidden in the depths of the human mind. And it is because of this corporeal looking that he calls it a theatre.* (Viglius Zuichemus in Yates, 2008)

All the reconstructions agree on the fact that Camillo built his theatre according to Vitruvius plans of the Roman theatre. More precisely, the theatre consists of a hemicycle of seven rows corresponding to seven degrees of reality.

1st Row	The planets	The divine and the principles of the universe
2nd Row	The banquet	Knowledge and the intelligible world
3rd Row	The cave or the Nymph's den	The natural elements
4th Row	The Gorgon sisters	The soul of man and the inner world
5th Row	Pasiphae or the bull	The embodied soul, man and his relation to the cosmos
6th Row	The heel straps or Mercury sandals	Human actions in the world
7th Row	Prometheus and the technique of fire	The arts, sciences and techniques

The seven rows are crossed by seven aisles forming sectors corresponding to planets. In accordance with the astrological tradition well known at the time, the planets are represented by human figures, producing a very effective connection between the microcosm and the macrocosm: namely, the human body – its parts, moods and psychological characteristics – and the natural and celestial world. In accordance with the Kabbalistic tradition, Camillo relates the seven planets to the first seven of the ten Sefira[5]. To each combination of planet and sefira, also corresponds an angel.

Planets	**Sefirot**	**Angel**
Luna (Diana)	Marcut	Gabriel
Mercury	Iseod	Michael
Venus	Hod and Nisach	Honiel
Sun (Apollo)	Tipheret	Raphael
Mars	Gabiarah	Camael
Jupiter	Chased	Zadchiel
Saturn	Bina	Zaphkiel

[5] According to the Encyclopaedia Brittanica, Sefirot, also spelled sephiroth, (sing. sefira or Sephira) are the 10 emanations, or powers, in esoteric Jewish mysticism (Kabbala), by which God the Creator was said to become manifest.

Arranged in a semicircle around the orchestra, the seven rows are multiplied by the seven aisles making a total of 49 points or *loci*. At each point, Camillo places one to seven images corresponding to different levels of knowledge: physical, metaphysical, divine. Because there are seven degrees of reality, the same image can be used in different places to signify something else. On each panel, there are one to seven painted images. At the base of each panel, there are boxes filled with papers containing extracts of texts, mostly from Cicero, as well as diagrams that stimulate knowledge, eloquence and memory. Camillo mentions the existence of 211 images, painted by Titian or Salviati, the meaning of which are explained in detail in *L'Idea del Teatro*.

Camillo adapts the Vitruvian theatre stage to his mnemonic project. Scholars who have studied *L'Idea del teatro* and redrawn the plans of the theatre (Yates, Schefer, Bolzoni, Léotard-Sommer) propose that its architecture relies on seven columns that represent the seven pillars of Solomon's house of wisdom. In relation to the plan drawn by Frances A. Yates and taken up by Bertrand Schefer (2007) (figure 2), French art historian Christine de Léotard-Sommer proposes a new draft (figure 3) that she has designed following the observation of a fresco located in a gallery of the Château de Fontainebleau[6], residence of King Francis I. According to Léotard-Sommer, the seven columns do not directly face the rows, which would obstruct the view of the spectator, but are located behind him/her, reproducing the semicircle of the hemicycle. This new spatial arrangement, which traps the spectator in a narrow semi-circular corridor, led me to redraw the plans of Camillo's theatre of memory (figure 4). What I suggest is to redraw the orchestra in a full circle where the seven columns are still facing the alleys but behind the spectator, allowing an unobstructed view of all the tiers. This draft deserves further study and research. What I am suggesting is that Camillo's theatre could also have been organized in a full circle like the Vitruvian

[6] *L'Eléphant Fleurdelisé* (1535-1537) The Royal Elephant decorated with a lily representing the King is a fresco by Rosso Fiorentino in the Francis I Gallery, Fontainebleau Castle, France.

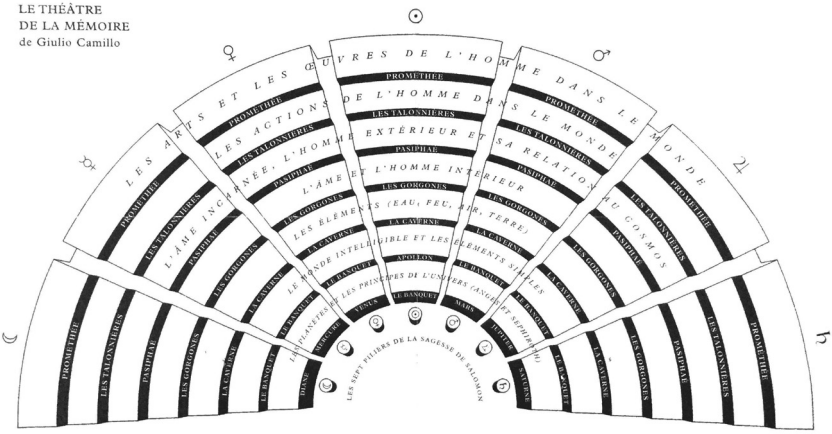

Figure 2. Drawing of Giulio Camillo's theatre of memory by Bertrand Schefer, 2007

theatre and not just in a semicircle. The spectator was thus standing at the centre of the orchestra with the seven columns in his back, protected from the gaze of others, inside the temple of Solomon, like the Prince in the center of the academiae.

Camillo's description of the theatre remains obscure as it often refers to hermetic and magical terms inherited from medieval traditions. By so doing Camillo *'selects his audience: there is a path to the increasingly hidden senses, whose levels correspond to different capacities of reception'* (Bolzoni, 2018). The theatre allows Camillo to establish a certain relation of power. The difference between the theatre of memory and other memory systems is that the places and images are not arbitrary but divine in nature, linked to a deep and hidden structure of the Renaissance encoded reality influenced by hermeticism, magic and the Kabala. The theatre of memory aimed to be larger and bigger than anything else… and that is probably the reason why it was never finished.

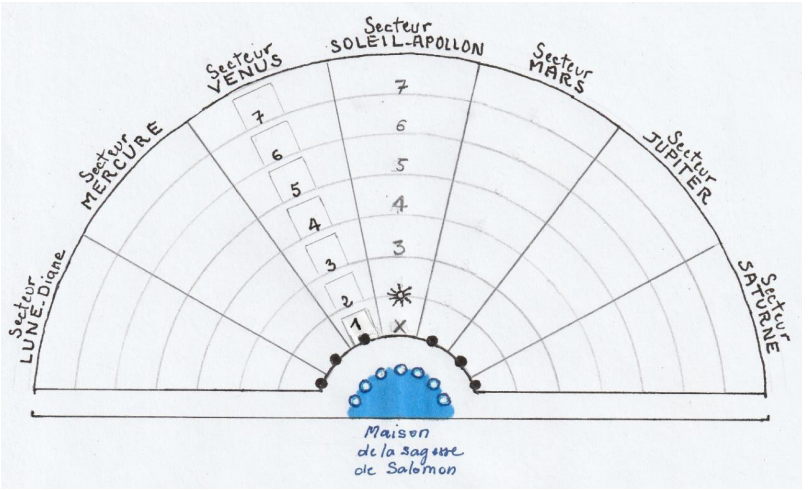

Figure 3. Giulio Camillo's theatre plan according to Christine de Léotard-Sommer, 2019.
O: 7 Columns delimiting Solomon's House. Each column is related to a planet. The user stands in the space between these columns and 1st degree; • and ¤: 7 planets determining the sectors of the creation of the universe, except the sun; 1 to 7: order of degrees in all sectors; X: special degree called "Apollo's Banquet" which precedes the planet Sun in the central sector

Giulio Camillo, a scenographer of memory

In Camillo's theatre, the spectator stands alone onstage, facing the semi-circular tiers where 49 panels are standing supposedly vertically, at the intersections of every row and aisle. By placing significant images in a theatre architecture, Camillo invites his spectator to translate images into words and words into images, and by so doing, to be active in the interpretation of semantic signs. The traditional art of memory, refers to *'imagenes agentes'* meaning *'active images'* that strike the mental eye and excite memory. Here the spectator, or shall I say the user, operates within a matrix of 211 *'active images'* using his/her reasoning, imagination and creativity to perform the knowledge of all things.

Anne Surgers reminds us that the Italian theatre commonly served as a model for the academies of scholars during the Renaissance (Surgers, 2007). These small-scale theatrical academies were invented for an elite in a very hierarchical society. All spectators were oriented towards a central, focal point of the stage and the

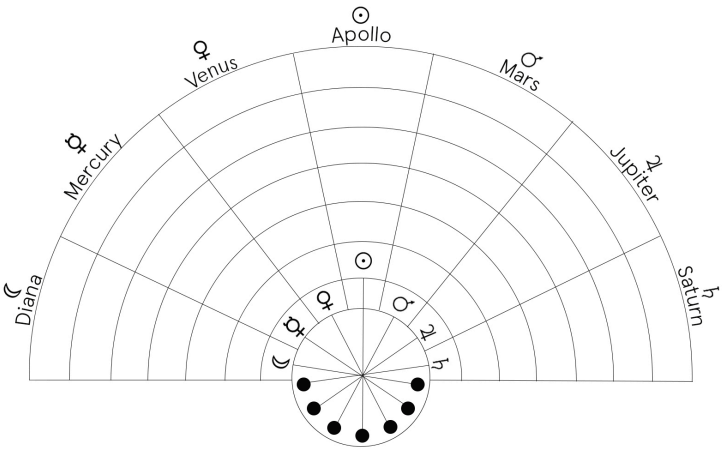

Figure 4. Author's personal draft of Giulio Camillo's theatre of Memory. Carolina E. Santo, 2020

auditorium had one ideal seat facing the stage intended for the King or Prince. In the theatre of memory, the user/performer, who is supposed to be the King of France, faces the sun, represented on the tiers, precisely at the usual place of the Prince according to the perspective rules of the Italian court theatres. With this inversion of places, Camillo proposes an inversion of values. Standing alone onstage before the tiers that represent the memory of the world, the user/performer takes the place of the creator. Here the King defies the place of god.

By insisting on the artificial aspect of his device, Giulio Camillo appears as a scenographer who orchestrates the performance, both as a guide and a manipulator. He controls everything through an extremely encrypted reality. But without the user, the theatre of memory is nothing. Camillo is a scenographer of memory in the sense that he re-organizes the world into a dramatic architecture, using the appropriate leverage of the theatre architecture of his time and recombining it to create a unique transformative experience: a

performance of memory in a dramatic architecture. Looking at Camillo's theatre today, we can understand it as a participatory performative device that appeals to both emotional and rational intelligence. The device is not intended to remember something but to excite the human cognitive system and to produce new knowledge through an organic and intuitive embodied experience. But let us not forget that in the Renaissance, the acquisition of knowledge was a way to impose power. In that sense, the theatre of memory was also an instrument for the performance of power.

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TOWARDS A PRACTICE-AS-RESEARCH MODEL OF *PERFORMISE*: TAKING SCENOGRAPHY FOR *ANTIGONE THE UNBRAVE* (2019) AS A CASE STUDY

YI-CHEN WU

Introduction

This article conducts a practice-based investigation, termed Practice as Research (PaR) (Nelson, 2013) to explore the concept of *'performise'* as developed by Pavis (2012, 2013, p.47). Pavis (2012, 2013) defines *performise* as a convergence of performance art and *mise en scène*, which refers to directors' audio-visual representations of texts, to point out multidisciplinary, potential ways of creating performance in contemporary theatre. The concept highlights the phenomenon of performative shift and echoes various investigations (e.g. Fischer-Lichte, 2004, 2008; Lehmann, 1995, 2006; Pitches & Popat, 2011) over the past two decades that enquire how performances are produced, rather than what performances mean. That is to say, conventional understanding of stage as static décor relevant to semiology is being replaced in contemporary theatre by a new phenomenological approach in which performers and spectators dynamically interact.

Nelson's (2013, p.40) PaR methodology foregrounds the entangled process of 'doing-thinking'. In my opinion, PaR can be added as an additional layer onto *performise*. Pavis (2010, p.331) similarly suggests an 'energetic criticism of semiology' that imagines theatre as a circuit of flowing energetics through which

space no longer functions as collections of the signified in a stable state, namely, representing the text into certain pre-defined signifiers to fill up the stage. Rather, space can be conceived 'as an energetic vector connected to its users, to their spatiotemporal coordinates, presence, energy, movements, and route through it' (ibid.). This is why I began employing PaR methodology during collaborative scenography and writing articles about the process. While the embodiment of *performise* can be seen as a kind of group-devised performance, the use of PaR enables the transformation of theatrical performances into a form of academic writing that does not exist within group-devised performance.

This article argues that for a scenographer to embody *perfomise*, it is necessary to employ PaR by combining scenographic practices with theatre and performance studies, particularly new dramaturgy. According to Trenscényi and Cochrane (2014), new dramaturgy is an evolving process of interweaving multidisciplinary performances and cultures to achieve unique aesthetics, unlike traditional dramaturgy which analyses and organises texts. Thus, new dramaturgy possesses an increasingly close relationship with scenography because the latter plays an important role in generating 'discursive space' (Collins & Nisbet, 2010, p.1) in the production of contemporary theatre. The association of the two fields transforms and broadens theatre-making into an organic network that intermeshes various areas of knowledge.

This article will first review the development of *mise en scène* and then explicate how *performise* improves upon notion of *mise en scène* and visual-spatial dramaturgy. The article will then introduce PaR methodology in the arts. Through the lens of PaR, I will discuss how *performise* differs from site-specificity and performance design to clarify the term *performise* in this article. I then present a case study based on scenography for *Antigone The Unbrave* (2019) in order to characterize conditions by which *performise* can be embodied. In conclusion, I summarize an approach towards a PaR model of *Performise* by re-verifying several factors uncovered in my scenographic works.

Definition of *Performise*

Before defining *performise*, it is necessary to trace the development of *mise en scène*. Pavis (2012, 2013, p.303) notes the term *mise en scène* originally stressed the first word *mise*, which refers to "putting" or "setting". Historically, Western scenography featured backdrops, flats, and wings painted with indoor or outdoor scenes. Until the 19th century, physical props such as books, desks, carpets, and flowers were used onstage in accordance with the Naturalism movement which strove to create an illusion of reality using a variety of dramatic and theatrical strategies (Zhèng, 2016). Moreover, by the end of the 1960s, the emergence of semiology regarded *mise en scène* as the accumulation of signs and readable meanings (Pavis, 2012, 2013). Scenography served to reinforce stable structures of texts for directors in accordance with *mise en scène*. To this point, stage space was integrated into textual space. However, as Pavis (2012, 2013) suggests, after the appearance of performance art and poststructuralism since the 1970s, performance and *mise en scène* have become increasingly incompatible. This critical perspective by Pavis, in my opinion, is an opportunity to release the autonomy of scenography and split stage space from textual space.

Scenography is no longer thought of as a tool exclusive to directors to order *mise en scène*. *Performise* offers an alternative to relink text and stage so that 'the text itself is also a performance' (Pavis, 2012, 2013, p.305) in a form of performative negotiation between the text and the stage that changes theatre productions today. To clarify this understanding, Pavis (2012, 2013) combined the word *mise* with the French word *perf*, which means "to perform", to create the new term *performise* that stresses the importance of performative action. I suggest that the flexible lexicon of *performise* can be conceived as building association to spectators' reactions, not only to texts. This *performise* hybrid concept implies innovative ways of making theatre that improves upon the original notion of *mise en scène*.

Here, I must clarify the relation between the terms *performise* and visual-spatial dramaturgy. Holger Klein (2017) employs the term spatial dramaturgy

as an analytic method that compares architecture to dramaturgy in order to systematically examine the mutual relationship between users and built spaces. Similarly, Cathy Turner (2015) applies architecture as an approach to investigate dramaturgy in theatre practices to explore how built spaces can generate potential for theatre production. Aligned with these concepts is Dorita Hannah's work (2011) that uses the term event-space to expand the spatiotemporal possibilities of built space into an active role that performs its intrinsic nature.

The above-mentioned researches are pertinent to visual-spatial dramaturgy because they all reveal ways of converging space with action into the performance, whether banal or theatrical, that is produced. Such a visual-spatial dramaturgy can be regarded as seeking visual signs of architectural elements that already exist in empty space and wait to be organizationally composed as dynamic events. In contrast, *performise* does not begin with previously-established space for theatrical performance. Rather, space is gradually constituted as doing-thinking opportunities unfold during creation.

Practice as Research in the Arts

This paper adopts a Practice as Research (PaR) approach (Nelson, 2013, pp.17-18) as a research project in which diverse modes of practice are a fundamental method of inquiry and are offered as evidence of research exploration. Instead of exclusively drawing on a theoretical investigation of arts, PaR holds that knowledge can be learnt by engaging in practices. Research into scenography can be enriched by adopting the processual approach of PaR which engages practice with theory. *PaR researchers 'do not merely "think" their way through or out of a problem, but rather they "practice" to a resolution'* (Nelson, 2013, p.19). Unlike other methodologies that focus on either theories or technics, PaR relies on practice to draw out potentialities and derive knowledge.

Furthermore, because the process constantly shifts between practice and theory, between thinking and doing, knowledge generated from PaR research is a form of *'fluid "knowing'"* (Nelson, 2013, p.37). The cyclic shift between thinking

and doing serves as a form of 'resonance', a term introduced by Nelson (2013), and makes PaR suitable for the study of scenography: on the one hand, it urges designers to be researchers in order to deepen the design concepts by absorbing multidisciplinary knowledge and writing papers; on the other hand, it impels designers to re-examine their understandings of academic theories during the creation of scenographic works.

In order to emphasize scenographic practice and research for performance along with PaR methodology, I deliberately use the term *performise* rather than "performance design" or "site-specificity" to describe my development of scenographic works. According to Sodja Zupanc Lotker (2015), performance design often occurs with site-specific performance with two major characteristics: staging diverse atypical spaces for theatrical performance; and shifting from organizing props to relations in the spaces. That is, designers are increasingly attentive to dynamic encounters between spectators and the sites in which they are located and less focused on serving texts to create an illusionistic world. Site-specific performance, as defined by Nick Kaye (2010), conceives locations as an essential part of performance events. Changing locations means creating different events.

Although the three terms all transcend the ordinary understanding of *mise en scène* in traditional theatre, unlike site-specificity, which selects particular locations that possess specific sociocultural contexts related to performances, *performise*, as realized through PaR, interrogates conventional theatres or sites that have no inherent, obvious characteristics related to the context. Thus, a PaR process is requisite to reveal the spatial and performative resonance between stage and text. The scenographers situate themselves *within* locations to shift between morphogenetic space for theatrical performance and various levels of reception.

Case Study: *Antigone The Unbrave* (2019)

Antigone The Unbrave (2019) was adapted from the famous Greek tragedy

Antigone. The story recounts the death of Antigone, daughter of Oedipus, the exiled King of Thebes, who kills herself after the new King Creon forbids the burial of Antigone's brother Polynices who was killed in battle. Other deaths follow including Creon's son Haemon who is in love with Antigone and Haemon's mother. Although Creon learns of the gods' disapproval of his decree, news arrives too late to save the lives of his family.

The director of *Antigone The Unbrave* (2019) and I agreed the piece alluded to the crisis of democracy caused by neoliberalism and emerging right-wing nationalism in Taiwan. The increasing pressure was especially pertinent to the fifteenth Taiwan presidential election an event which crystallized attention across Taiwan on issues of nationality and independence. Given these concerns, the director and I decided to layer these latent sociocultural issues within *Antigone*. To achieve this, I apply Trenscényi's (2015, 2016) concept of new dramaturgy to highlight the potentials of reality shared by performers and spectators. The character Antigone denotes the people of Taiwan who lack power but believe in the value of liberty and are forced to fight for it. Thebes is represented by a giant corporation, the CEO of whom is Creon and the Thebian salariat class is the chorus.

To develop scenographic works that investigate the embodiment of *performise*, I have borrowed the creative process from the Creative Articulations Process (CAP), a PaR model established by Bacon and Midgelow (2014). CAP includes six facets. 'Opening' concentrates on one's body-mind to allow the emergence of the unknown and observe how it leads to the creation of a work. The second facet, 'Situating', emphasizes increasing awareness of one's situation and response. The third facet, 'Delving', involves reflection on the breadth of research issues. The fourth facet, 'Raising', attempts to explore other fields while enhancing mind-body awareness. The fifth facet, 'Anatomizing', undertakes experimental practice to examine feelings and imagination. In the final facet, 'Outwarding', as one becomes more engaged in the process and realizes new findings, it becomes possible to complete a creative work and share it with others. Each facet can be

Figure 1. Opening scene of *Antigone The Unbrave* (2019). The scenography moved wings to expose industrial materials of the theatre's interior such as wood and steel trusses, walls, marley, concrete floors, lights, and opened backdoor to bring in outdoor scenery. Scenography and photo attributed to the author

repeated during a PaR project to clarify and strengthen the linkages between practice and theory. Although the CAP model is based on PaR researchers' body awareness, I found that the six facets of CAP were clear guidelines for developing scenography for prior works including *Enactor* (2017), *I am a Normal Person* (2018), and my current work *Antigone The Unbrave* (2019).

The first facet 'Opening' involved reflecting on my own perceptions while the second facet 'Situating' led me to contemplate my position within the social structure of contemporary Taiwan. By engaging in this exercise, I found that a sense of floating permeates the main concept of the piece. By "floating", I mean that Antigone's long exile and return back to Thebes was an alterity comparable to the circumstances of people who experience a disconnect to their own society rooted in the oppressive financial inequity of the global wealth pyramid. Thus, the director and I decided to use the urban park as a constantly-relocating realm where people move between their jobs and daily life and struggle between

freedom and oppression.

My exploration then engaged the third and fourth facets of CAP, 'Delving' and 'Raising' respectively, in which I adopted Pavis's (2013) concept of *performise* to further develop the piece's dramaturgy. The director and I used children's playground equipment such as seesaws and swings as metaphors that denote contentions of political and economic power. Guided by *performise*, I was focused on performance-led scenography, which transforms deployment of venue and props into performance, rather than trying to logically visualize the depicted scenes onstage.

Our collaboration continued with the processual facet of 'Anatomizing' discussed earlier in this article. The performance venue was chosen not for site-specific qualities that would help the performance, but because it was the only suitable venue that fit our production and performance schedule. Constrained by the lack of other choices, a *performise* approach allowed us to examine the specificities of the venue, its advantages and disadvantages, and merge them with the scenography. This process bolstered my position that *performise* is distinct from site-specificity. The venue was originally built during the Japanese colonial period as a warehouse B9 at Pier 2 for storing sugar (Newsletter of Taiwan Sugar Corporation, 2013). In 2002, the Taiwanese government rejuvenated the abandoned warehouse area as The Pier-2 Art Center in which warehouse B9 was partially refurbished as an experimental theatre. The Pier-2 Art Center has become a famous tourist spot that helps drive economic development in Kaohsiung City. The rebuilding of warehouse B9 embodies the tourism-based Art Centre's contradictory relationship with its neighbourhood. Visible black steel trusses, which represent the new economic power of the creative art industry, vertically and horizontally strengthen the building's original wood structure, which refers to the building's original neighbourhood and concomitant poverty. The warehouse manifests a sense of provisional juxtaposition in space and time. The director agreed with my suggestion that the contradiction could be expressed by exposing the theatre's black internal walls and steel trusses and removing

Figure 2. Opening scene of *Antigone The Unbrave* (2019). The scenography moved wings to expose industrial materials of the theatre's interior such as wood and steel trusses, walls, marley, concrete floors, lights, and opened backdoor to bring in outdoor scenery. Scenography and photo attributed to the author

stage wings to transform these industrial materials into the modern crowded cityscape of Kaohsiung at night. To further the visual metaphor, I used the same type of trusses to build a horizontal rectangular frame on the ground that connected with the theatre's black trusses beside the walls to create an extending yet contrary sense from/between the past to/and the present. Furthermore, the rectangular truss frame was uncovered to allow the reflection of colourful lights hidden behind the trusses to shine through. On top of the truss frame, flat wooden boards were attached to serve as passages or platforms for performers. This rectangular shape clarified the director's idea to have a circular running route for performers both inside and outside the theatre. The performers' running upon the flat wooden boards made loud rhythmic sounds which shook borders between the theatrical and the ordinary. Considering the on-stage and off-stage as a whole, I intentionally destroyed the backdrop, which was cut into long rectangular pieces, to expose tourists passing by outside the theatre and to

transform the backdrop into part of a live performance. The backdrop no longer functioned as a normal stage curtain but rather as the fragmented sky, doors, and tunnels that indicate performative space.

The director and I wanted to further emphasize the performative interface between invisibility and visibility in the piece but were at a loss as to how to achieve this. After some contemplation on the sixth CAP facet of 'Outwarding', I realized that the choice of colour was key to completing the scenographic work. I noticed that the backstage concrete floor was light grey and could visually connect to the wooden boards and the backdrop if they were in a similar colour. Moreover, the light grey was also the original colour of the trusses. The grey colour tones would link the various material pieces as a unity. Following the same logic, in order to make the entire floor inside and beneath the rectangular truss frame resemble the black auditorium platform, I covered the floor with black marley to extend the stage into the auditorium. In addition, I used navy blue to colour a pool on upstage right that was designed for Antigone's death and afterward, related the water in the pool to tears of Antigone's ancestresses which were accumulating there.

With the three colours – black, grey, and navy blue, the materiality of the walls, floors, trusses, and backdrop raised a question: Did the darkness of the walls, trusses, auditorium, and backstage help "perform"? In this respect, scenographic practice and research embody *performise* in the venue and contribute to the creation of liminal spaces in which old and new, performing and spectating, and inside and outside, converge together. During the after-performance talk, several spectators commented they felt that the stage transformed into a playground, and they found themselves encompassed and stimulated by the scenography to contemplate the relationships among theatre, props, and performance. In addition, spectator feedback also noted that the specifically designed backdrop and truss frames helped extend the performance space to the outside world and engendered a sense of floating in diverse space-time structures.

Figure 3. Scene 4 of *Antigone The Unbrave* (2019). The scene design, where Antigone walked forwards on a narrow bridge from the backstage to the pool, was synthesized through study of Greek mythology, contemporary architecture, and lighting. Scenography and photo attributed to the author

Summary: Towards a Practice-as-Research Model of *Performise*

In development for almost three years now, my Practice-as-Research model of *Performise* can be summarized as a doing-thinking process that involves group-devised creation. It offers theatrical performances more possibilities and theories to transform the restrictions of conventional theatres into the spatiotemporal dramaturgy of the spectators' mixed realities. This is something that performance design does not provide.

In *Antigone* (2019), I have identified four factors to embody *performise*. Firstly, opening the stage to the auditorium generated proximity and involvement and was realized through the connection of the rectangular truss frame with the auditorium platform. Secondly, concepts such as decenterization, blurred borders, and overlapped yet recognizable realms between performers and spectators were achieved through multi-layered frames: the rectangular truss frame merged with the backstage while overlapping the stage floor with the auditorium, the opened

backdoor of the theatre transformed spectators and tourists into performers, the sliced backdrop hanging alongside the theatre's original trusses on upper stage transformed the partially exposed backstage into a shifting space, and the pool interwove personal and national histories. Thirdly, focusing on efficacy of performance elements encouraged spectators to actively provide responses and was embodied through augmenting the steel trusses, slicing the backdrop, and bringing in the outdoor scenery. Finally, the performance of architectural structure was emphasized by analysing the context of the partially refurbished venue. Employing these factors, we arrive at a model of *performise* that involves ever-increasing resolution through the use of networked traces and events, that functions as theoretical research, and simultaneously as scenographic practice.

According to Pavis (2014, 2016, p.36), *mise en scène* today 'help(s) us to grasp how the work, either choreographic or theatrical, has been conceived, how it is built up and composed of different materials'. However, *mise en scène* has become quite different from its original meaning. The lack of clarity of the term necessitates considering the use of *performise* as new alternative concept to offset the lack of meaning provide by *mise en scène*.

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SPACE AND PERFORMANCE

TRANSFORMATION OF THE FOUND ENVIRONMENT IN PERSIAN PASSION THEATRE

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Introduction

If we consider Performance as an encounter between performers and the audience where all are contributing to establishing a relationship with one another, we may wonder what kind of relationship we encounter in the performance, and how the shape of this relationship has changed throughout performance history. With emergence of architectural theatre buildings, during the Italian Renaissance Theatre, the nature of the relationship changed and a social barrier was created in it. This research paper will seek to find some answers to the questions such as: what kind of relationship is shaped between the found audience in the found environment, and how this relationship differs from the one created between regular audiences in conventional theatre buildings. The case study for this research is Persian passion theatre, which comes from the ancient ritual in Iran that is alive and still being performed in the social found environment with found audiences.

There are too many research methods on Persian Passion Theatre from different points of view such as: mythology, religion, semiology, music, roots and history, dramaturgy, stage and set design, costum and props, etc. while this paper mentions briefly all these aspects, it will focus mostly on the cultural and social

relationship between environment and audience of traditional and ritual Persian theatre.

In open-air theatres like historical pageant productions and ancient Greek theatres, spectators had the experience of the surrounding natural features where the sky, trees or even buildings in the street were part of the setting and were sometimes used as a background for the stage. These pre-existing surroundings of the human social sites, like cities, villages, squares etc. may be described as a found environment.

> *Found space, which is frequently used as a setting for environmental performance, is any given space, used in its existing state for performance, most often space not originally intended for performance. Unlike most conventional theatres with a clear separation of stage and auditorium, a found environment has no preordained spectator space.* (Aronson, 2018, p.9)

As Schechner described in *6 Axioms*:

> *The environment for theatre could be a divide in two different ways. In the first case, the performance can create an environment by transforming a space while in the second case, there is given space and it could be negotiating between performance and environment. The found environment is called a negotiated environment by Schechner. This type of environment does not need to be designed and transformed for the spectators. The found environment is more fluid and leads sometimes to the performance being controlled by spectators.* (Schechner, 1968)

Usually, we can meet found audiences in an environmental theatre performing in social spaces connected to our everyday life. The people in the street who have cultural and social associations with these social spaces become a found audience. These types of audiences are different from the audience in conventional theatres

where spectators buy the ticket and know where to go and sit, in both classic and modern theatre buildings.

Persian passion theatre, called Taaziyeh[1], is a type of performance that happens in the found environment and observed by the found audience. Taaziyeh is an indigenous form of Persian music theatre adopted from the religious ceremonies commemorating the suffering and tragic death of Hussein ibn Ali, the grandson of the prophet Muhammad. Taaziyeh is performed once a year. This traditional theatre tells the story of the battle of Karbala, in which Muhammad's grandson Hussein and his followers were killed in A.D. 680. Taaziyeh dramas are popular performances, and they are usually staged and watched in public sites.

By observing Taaziyeh as an environmental theatre which happens in social spaces we may ask what is the real essence of Taaziyeh space, and how the environment of Taaziyeh affects the relationship between the audience and the performance to compare with conventional theatre building; why the found environment is capable of making cultural and social associations with its audience, and how this relationship works, especially in Persian passion theatre. In other words, how the found environment was occupied and transformed by Taaziyeh as a traditional theatre in Iran?

Discussion

The origins of theatre go back far into the past to the religious rites of the earliest communities where the performative event happened in the outdoor found environment. And then it reached its dramatic forms in ancient Greek tragedy.

The Environmental theatre had its roots in the European medieval theatre. In the early medieval time the liturgical or church drama of western Europe was born based on the birth, life and resurrection of Christ. Medieval liturgical drama developed from the Christian liturgy, particularly from the Easter celebration,

[1] Taaziyeh means comfort, condolence or expression of grief. It comes from the root Aza, which means mourning.

somehow similarly to Persian Passion theatre developing from the mourning ritual ceremony. The place for Medieval Liturgical performance at the beginning was inside a church or cathedral, and then it was gradually moved outside the church.

> *The twelfth-century Anglo-Norman play Adam, one of the earliest to include speeches in the vernacular, was certainly set out of doors, with the church doors forming a background through which God and chief actors came and went while devils ran about in front of the raised platform.* (Hartnoll, 1978, p.40)

The huge change in the theatre environment started when theatre of the Italian Renaissance formed the new theatre building with its proscenium arch and developed painted scenery. This was when the architectural building emerged with its rigid separation between stage and auditorium and when the proscenium arch was created.

After many years centered on the proscenium arch theatre buildings, in the late 19th century, changes began to take place in European theatre. These changes happened both in terms of architecture and content. As Slovenian poet, playwright, and translator Ivo Svetina has noted

> *The year 1890 was undoubtedly a milestone with regard to a new understanding of the theatre, seeing it not just as a box in which performances are held evening after evening, but also as a space that has to be subordinated to the form and content of the performed theatre piece.* (Svetina, 2010, p.10)

Non-theatrical spaces have been so used throughout history, particularly for folk and traditional performances. In the twentieth century, non-theatrical spaces have been more used by modern experimental theatre groups against proscenium staging. The term Environmental theatre gained during the late 1960s and 1970s, primarily due to the practice and theoretical writings of the

American theorist/director Richard Schechner. In 1960th, certain happenings or environments were created within art galleries, just as 'open space' stagings were created within a neutral theatrical space, but others were created in 'found spaces', which could add their significance to the experience.

The goal of this paper is not to analyze Environmental theatre history and space in modern experimental theatres, but to focus mostly on the social and anthropological relation of performance and its environment on the found audience. Persian Passion theatre as a traditional and ritual theatre that would happen in social spaces and observed with found audiences is the case study for this analysis.

But first, we have to ask some questions: What is a performance? A play? A concert? A circus and carnival? A celebration ceremony? A funeral? Do these events have anything to do with rituals? Performance is a mode of behavior, an approach to experience, it is a play, a sport, aesthetics, popular entertainment, experimental theatre and more. As Christopher Small mentioned 'Performance is an encounter in which human beings relate to one another. Audience and performers are contributing to its nature through the relationship they establish with one another through the performance' (Small, 1967).

This established relationship between audience and performers in natural environmental spaces is different from conventional theatre buildings with a separation between auditorium and stage.

We can consider and observe this kind of relationship where human beings relate to one another in an old traditional ritual play in Iran entitled Persian Passion theatre or Taaziyeh.

Historical background and origins of Persian passion theatre

In order to get to know Persian passion theatre, first we have to find out something about the origin of theatre in Iran. If we say that theatre comes from religious ceremonies and traditions, then we have to look back at religions in Iran. Iran had monotheistic (single-deity) religions unlike multi-deity religions

in India and Greece. The single-deity religions in Iran like Zoroastrian and Islam have less dramatic aspects than multi-deity religions. Religious myths in multi-deity religions create stories between God and humans or between God and another God. But in single-deity Iranian religions, creating a story with the face and physical appearance of God and saints, or stories describing their behavior, is forbidden. Still, Persian mythology with traditional tales and stories of ancient origins did exist.

> *Before Islam, ritual ceremonies originate from some famous mythologies and rites such as Sug-e-Siavush[2] based on the story from Shahnameh of Ferdowsi[3]. Siavush[4] is a major figure in Ferdowsi's epic, The Shahname. There is a document that people made a ritual ceremony because of Siavush death and it could be the first Taazieh in Iran 3000 years ago.* (Beyzai, 1965)

A study on Iranian Theatre, written by Bahram Beyzai[5], is a valuable Iranian book about the origin and history of Persian passion theatre, which has not been translated into English yet. This paper brings some facts from this book.

Islam was brought to Iran via Arab-Islamic conquest in 650 AD. However, the achievements of the previous Persian civilizations were not lost, but were to a great extent absorbed by the new Islamic polity. Islam has been the official religion of Iran ever since. There are two main branches in Islam: Sunni and Shia. A split occurred shortly after the death of Muhammad over the question of who to lead the Muslims. After Islam came to Iran, the religious myth was created from the stories of the Battle of Karbala, which was the foundation

[2] Mourning of Siavush.
[3] Ferdowsi was a Persian poet and the author of Shahnameh (Book of Kings) which is the world's longest epic poem created by a single poet.
[4] Siavush was a legendary Iranian prince from the earliest days of the Iranian Empire. Siavush is the symbol of the innocent who had been killed by Afrasiab.
[5] Bahram Beyzai is a critically and popularly acclaimed Iranian filmmaker, playwright, theatre director, screencritically and popularly acclaimedwriter, film editor and master of Persian history and Islamic studies.

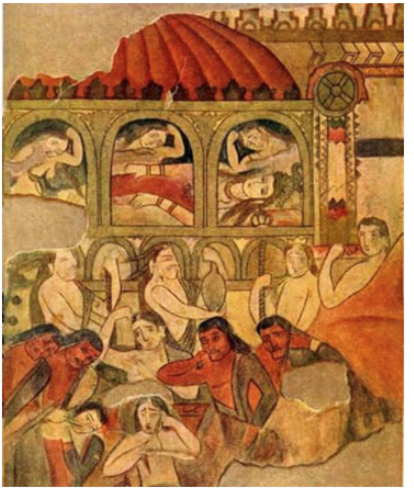

Figure 1. Painting of the archaeological image mourning for Siavus the original image *Archaeology in the U.S.S.R* book by A. L. Mongait

for Persian passion theatre and the mourning group movement or Muharram festival for Shia.

Mourning ritual in Muharram Festival

Taaziyeh usually takes place during Muharram festival, which begins on the first day of the Muslim month of Muharram and ends on the tenth day, called Ashura. The Muharram festival, which was started after 650 AD, has improved and found new forms over time, and we can still find some types of it nowadays in Iran. There are some dramatic aspects that can be observed in these Mourning groups rituals such as: the group, harmonized, soft movements and specific rhythms; a type of group singing called Nohe in Persian, singing sadly about the injustice and cruelty suffered by the grandson of Mohammad; use of musical instruments like Senj and Dram as well as designed elements such as the symbol of the story of the Battle of Karbala.

Taaziyeh

Taaziyeh is an indigenous form of Persian music theatre adopted from the religious ceremonies. This traditional theatre tells the story of the battle of Karbala, in which Muhammad's grandson Hussein and his followers were killed by the second Umayyad caliph Yazid in A.D. 680. at Karbala, Iraq. For the Shi'a, Hussein's suffering and death became a symbol of sacrifice in the struggle between the right and wrong, justice and truth and injustice.

Taaziyeh dramas are popular performances, and they are usually staged and watched in public places. As a cultural historian and performing artist, Peter J. Chelkowski observes "Taaziyeh is a complex subject involving many disciplines, such as religion, history, literature, anthropology, psychology, sociology, music, and the fine arts, as well as drama and theatre" (Chelkowski, 1979, p.255).

Participants and spectators do not view Taaziyeh as theatre, but rather as part of ritual mourning. Nevertheless, Taaziyeh has many theatrical conventions. The players do not memorize their roles, rather, they read them from strips of paper held in their hands called Tumar. The 'good' characters, on the side of Imam Hussein, chant their lines in classical Persian musical modes and wear the colour green. The 'bad' characters declaim their lines in stentorian tones and wear the colour red. Women's roles are taken by men who wear black and veil their faces. The performances offer a number of roles for children, played by young boys. The red colour symbolises death.

The design and setting in Taaziyeh utilize a special technique. This unique technique may not be accepted by western theatres or theatre designers, but Taaziyeh spectators accept the convention easily. They know the story and they use the symbolic elements in Taaziyeh to imagine the whole story in their mind. Taaziyeh spectators are not surprised when they see two actors holding a door to show the door of Emam's house, or when they see a chair in two separate scenes

representing a throne in the court of Yazid[6], or when a bowl of water represents a river. Props, except the real ones such as swords, are all symbolic in this play.
To name a few more symbolic theatrical rules, the performers turn around the platforms once or twice to show the distance between two locations and passing of the time, and in order to determine the places as different cities in the performance, they announce the name of the location after turning around the platform. The musical intervals also show the passage of time.
The only conventional building built for Taaziyeh was Takiyeh Dowlat in Tehran in the Royal compound. Takiyeyeh Dowlat was built by the order of Naser al-Din Shah Qajar in 1870. This building was inspired by Europe's opera houses, but it was destroyed in 1947. As Chelkowski observed, eventually, Takiyeh Dowlat's walls, canvas ceiling and circular stage were copied in Takiyehs all over the country. After this building had been destroyed, social spaces for Takiyehs were built by society members, and these are the spaces for Taaziyeh and Muharram festival.

The environment and space in Taaziyeh

> *Like Western passion plays, Taaziyeh dramas were originally performed outdoors, at crossroads and other public where large audiences could gather. Performances later took place in the courtyards of inns and private homes, but eventually unique structures called Takiyeh or Husseinyeh were constructed by individual towns for the staging of the plays.* (Chelkowski, 2005, p.17)

In Taaziyeh, the main characters who articulate and transform the space into the stage for Taaziyeh are ordinary citizens of that district. Citizens of a particular town or village give contributions and work together to build and decorate the space for Takiyeh. These temporary places are built in each town district with the

[6] Yazid was the second caliph of the Umayyad caliphate. His caliphate was marked by the death of Husayn ibn Ali.

Figure 2. Kemal al-mulk painting of Takiyeh Dowlat

support of locals during the Muharram festival. People cooperate both socially and culturally, and women even prepare food and refreshments and serve them to the spectators.

Briefly, we can say that Taaziyeh performs in a found environment that could be a spontaneously made circle in the street or a street corner, and all these places exist and have their own identities before they are used as stages. The audience area in Taaziyeh is a small or huge circle around the performers. There is no predesigned set up for this theatre, and the found audience are the people passing by who create a circle around it. As Shechner stated in six Axioms, the negotiated environment is a more fluid situation that makes dialogue and shifting dynamic among performers and spectators, which we can observe in Taaziyeh as well.

The use of open-air theatre changes the system of illusion and technique on the stage. In Taaziyeh, there is no technological setting and even no light setting.

Figure 3. Ta'ziyeh ritual in Iran – A UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage

Usually, the natural, outside light is used, and the performers use minimal, symbolic costumes and props to represent the characters and what they do.
Taaziyeh for Iranian audience is part of a ritual mourning where its audience stands in a circle exchanging dynamic energy with the performance. Although they all know the end of the story, the non-illusionstic convention of Taaziyeh ends with a moment of sadness that cause the audience sob.
Nowadays, we can still see this Ritual Environmental Theatre in social spaces in many cities in Iran. In contrast to the richness of Takiyeh's decorations, Taaziyeh stage design is rather minimal and symbolic. All Takiyehs, regardless of their size, are constructed as rounded theatres to intensify the dynamics between actors and audience. "The spectators are literally surrounded by the action and often become physical participants in the play, in unwalled Takiyeh. It is not unusual for combat scenes to occur behind the audience" (Chelkowski, 2005, p.17).
Peter Brook, who got inspired by Taaziyeh, mentioned:

> *Taaziyeh is one of the strongest things I have ever seen. A group of 400 villagers, the entire population of the place, sitting under the tree and passing from roars of laughter to outright sobbing—although they knew perfectly well the end of the story—as they saw Hussein in danger of being killed, and then fooling his enemies, and then being martyred. And when he was martyred, the theatre form became truth.* (Chelkowski, 1979, p.255)

Conclusion

To take part in ritual performative events is to explore and celebrate the concept of how we relate to ourselves, to one another and to the world. The environment has a crucial role in making this social and physical relationship between a performance and audience. Before the introduction of the rigid separation between auditorium and stage, and the imposed social barrier in the classic theatre buildings, the natural outside environment was the space for celebrating these ritual events. By emergence and development of architectural theatre buildings, this relationship was changed and shaped by creation of a physical distance and social barrier between performance and audience.

When we look through the history of environmental theatre, we can see that different types of environmental theatre operated in parallel with the narrative western theatre. This paper, however, instead of focusing on contemporary environmental theatre, focused on and researched only one ritual traditional environmental theatre which has been performed for more than 1000 years in order to emphasize the relationship between ritual, environment and found audiences.

In Taaziyeh, spectators explore the environment of performance as a social space. This found environment is part of their social environment. It could be in the street, in the street corner or in front of a mosque. Actually, the space of performance in Taaziyeh is defined originally by the action of performers and spectators. This natural environment is the very place where the social and cultural relationship between audience and performance is shaped.

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MAPPING MEMORIES. EXPLORING INTANGIBLE HERITAGE THROUGH PLAYWRITING: AN ARCHITEXTURAL APPROACH

JENNY KNOTTS

In this paper I will share some early findings from my Practice-as-Research PhD, *Play/writing histories: Navigating the Personal, Public and Institutional stories of theatre space: An Architextural study of the Citizens Theatre*. My research seeks to model a methodology for architexting: a mode of playwriting that reveals the hidden histories of buildings by exploring the dramaturgy of their architecture[1]. I propose that playwriting can be utilised in this way as a tool for historiography and the aim of my study is to devise, define and develop a methodology for this practice. Playwriting offers the potential to juxtapose, entwine and layer stories to reveal connections, commonalities and contrasts between seemingly disparate events, people and moments. It can engage with a collision of worlds and temporal planes, ideas and phenomenological affects. Therefore, I suggest, it is the ideal tool for investigating embodied, palimpsestic spaces by responding to both the materiality of a site, and the events that did, do and will happen in it.

[1] The word 'architext' has previously been utilised in several other contexts. In the field of literary theory, and specifically, poetics, Gérard Genette uses the term, as explained by Robert Schole in a Foreward to categorise texts by their 'durable links between particular modes and themes' (Schole, 1992, p.ix). Mary Ann Caws describes 'architexture' as 'the surface texture of the construction made by reading… the structure of the connecting passage, bridge or corridor between elements as it relates to the material of the text, or that stretching between two texts' (Caws, 1981, p.xiv).

Through architextural practice, I identify and utilise commonalities in the purposes and processes of playwriting and architecture to discover how these practices may illuminate each other. By harnessing methodologies employed by architects to create and depict potential spaces, and using these to explore how layers of history in existing spaces may interrelate, architexting investigates how spaces, and specifically buildings, are shared through time creating diachronic communities.

My subject site is the Citizens Theatre, and, in particular, its non-performance spaces. In these spaces, shared by staff, patrons and artists, layers of public, personal and institutional stories coalesce to form a rich, alternative archive of this Victorian theatre. While the theatre's artistic legacy is frequently lauded, examining the social, political, cultural and emotional connections to the theatre is, I believe, vital to a comprehensive understanding of its history and its potential future impact. The narrative of the materiality of the building itself, through its various alterations and repurposing of space, betrays a rich cultural and social history. Not only is the Citizens Theatre an internationally-renowned producing theatre, and a highly significant example of theatre architecture[2], but, as the last remaining building of a once bustling community, it will function as the keystone of the ongoing regeneration of the Gorbals[3] locale in which it resides. The theatre building itself is currently undergoing the largest redevelopment in its history, giving impetus to this study and meaning that many of its spaces will soon be repurposed yet again, or lost entirely. I propose that through architextural practice I can mine the layers of these sited, often hidden, histories of the building, navigating diachronic relationships between

[2] The Citizens Theatre is a grade B listed building and is described as 'one of the most important remaining pieces of theatrical fabric in the British Isle' TheatreSearch, 'The Citizens Theatre: A Conservation Management Plan' (2012).
https://issuu.com/citizenstheatre/docs/citizen_theatre_conservation_management_plan

[3] Historically a densely populated and deprived area of the city of Glasgow, the Gorbals is currently undergoing a large scale regeneration project involving the demolition of many of its residential, public, and privately owned buildings.

individuals, communities and sites to explore, reveal and preserve these untold stories.

Architecture and dramaturgy

The rich relationship between architecture and dramaturgy offers the potential for new approaches to each through an exchange, or overlap, of methodologies and philosophies. For the purposes of this study I am interested in both architecture as a concept and the tangible processes that architects undertake. The term 'architecture' is perhaps as indefinable as 'dramaturgy', yet useful to this study is its frequent association with culture, rather than just material structures (Ballantyne, 2002, p.31). In *Event Cities*, architect and academic Bernard Tschumi writes: 'architecture is as much about the events that take place inside buildings as it is about the building themselves' (Tschumi, 1994, p.13). For Tschumi, architecture is not merely a material structure but a continuous process of interactions. He states in 'Six Concepts' that architecture is 'a combination of spaces, movements and events' (Tschumi, 2000, p.176) suggesting that it is in the relationship between these elements that architecture exists. Just as Tschumi advocates the inseparability of events and spaces in architecture, architect Tony Fretton defines architecture as being 'completed by events' (Fretton, 1999, p.15). Juliet Rufford describes Tschumi's approach to architecture as a process which 'continue(s) indefinitely as users interact with buildings' (Rufford, 2015, p.33). In this way, she suggests that these processes 'are analogous to performance processes, since both are time based and dynamic' (Rufford, p.33). In *Theatre/ Archaeology: Disciplinary Dialogues*, Mike Pearson and Michael Shanks describe dramaturgy as 'an assemblage, the process of ordering or patterning the different elements into a performance structure' (Pearson & Shanks, 2001, p.55). While Cathy Turner and Synne Behrndt acknowledge that a conclusive, or even agreed, definition of the term dramaturgy is somewhat elusive (Turner & Behrndt, 2008, p.6) they propose that it, too, can be understood as 'the combination of narratives or strata (which) produces new meanings that are not inherent

in any of the elements if viewed singly' (Turner & Behrndt, p.32) and suggest that 'it is in the transitions that the dramaturgy is discovered'. Like architecture, dramaturgy is constituted of a combination of elements that are in constant dialogue with each other. Turner and Behrdnt suggest 'dramaturgy… allows, like architecture, a new space, if a fragile one' (Turner & Behrndt, p.4).

Yet while many scholars have explored the overlaps between the conceptual notions of architecture and dramaturgy, focus is often placed on abstract ideas of space, place and structure. My research seeks to expand this investigation of the relationship between architecture and dramaturgy to consider how it may function in practical and specific terms. Rather than constructing a general spatiality through writing, my study seeks to explore how elements of architectural processes may be applied to the work of the playwright in constructing a dramaturgical framework. To do this I am creating three 'architexts' each of which investigate the potential of a different aspect of the architectural design process as prompt for scriptwriting.

Unlike other forms of creative writing, a playscript harbors an inherent duality: it is both a creative offering in its own right whilst constantly pointing to an event beyond itself, i.e. a performance. In 'Playscripts as Knowledge Objects', Dallas J. Baker recognises the participatory nature of performance, yet also notes that '(T)he script on the page is also a participatory space' that is activated by the reader (Baker, 2018, p.176). This inherent duality is also true of architectural drawings. Both the playscript and the architectural drawing point towards communal, embodied experiences beyond themselves. As Schaller writes in *The Art of Architectural Drawing*, 'architecture can act as a place for the collective experience than can, it is hoped, uplift, inspire, and thereby connect one human spirit to another' (Schaller, 1997, p.18). Theatre, too, is almost uniquely in the arts world, contingent on collective experience. However, while the participants in a theatre context, more often than not, share a temporal plane, in architecture it is space that is the point of unity between communities that may be separated by hours, months, or decades. Both the architectural drawing and the playscript

precede these acts of community. In terms of architectural drawings, while two-dimensional renderings of future sites are created, and understood, within the context of the three-dimensional buildings they point towards, it is important to remember that, like the playscript, the architectural drawing is a product and producer of knowledge in and of itself (Robbins, 1994, p.116).

Narrativity of space

Architexting is specifically intended to be utilised in the exploration of 'hidden histories'. By hidden histories I mean stories and experiences that fall out with institutional or 'official' narratives of a particular building, but rather encompass the everyday, situated happenings as lived and recounted by the people who interact with the building on a regular basis. It seeks, therefore, to expand existing institutional narratives. In my bid to reveal, explore and celebrate hidden histories of the Citizens Theatre, it is important that my primary data consists of stories that have not been previously recorded or available in the public domain. Over the course of several months I conducted oral histories and workshops with people who are, or have been, connected to the theatre. I interviewed 42 adults and held three workshops involving a total of 24 children and young people. I sought contributions from all facets of the theatre's operations to garner as many different perspectives and experiences as possible, including past and present staff members, artists, patrons, community collective members, Nightschool participants, Young Company members and kids@citz attendees. My participants ranged in age from six to 99 years.

As a practice that seeks to celebrate plurality, multiple perspectives and co-existence, oral history, as a 'democratising approach' (Jordanova, 2006, p.55), not only satisfies the research needs of this methodology, but also its political and ethical framework. As an embodied process, oral history challenges ideas of teleological histories through its ability to bring the past into the present and vice versa and invites dynamic overlaps and correlations between ideas of space, history, performance and everyday experiences. Where possible,

my interviews took place in the Citizens Theatre itself. Interviewees were encouraged to lead me in a walk around the building, permitting me to both witness and experience their own regular routes[4]. Walking through the building not only provoked memories and sensory reactions such as smell and touch that may not have been unearthed through a static interview, but also, in the case of interviewees who had known the building in its previous configurations, allowed us to explore previously lost and repurposed spaces by physically tracing their absence in the current building. While the architexts I create take their dramaturgical framework from architectural drawing processes and examine a particular area of the building through this lens, the content of these playscripts in drawn from this archive of oral histories created specifically for this project. Oral histories are, by their very nature, subjective and personal. Rather than a strictly factual account of the theatre's history, if such a thing were possible, architexting seeks to explore these personal experiences of the building. In doing so, they consider, following Coates, the 'narrativity' of these spaces, rather than a necessarily historically accurate version. As Lynn Abrams writes in *Oral History Theory*, 'Memory stories are not repositories of an objective truth about the past, they are creative narratives shaped in part by the personal relationship that facilitates the telling' (Abrams, 2016, p.68). Architexting is a methodology for investigating the relationship between these personal experiences and how they may overlap, connect or contrast with each other. It offers, therefore, a way of understanding how buildings can facilitate both synchronic and diachronic community-building and belonging. Through our connections to the buildings we use, we become part of a community that spans the lifetime of that built space.

The oral histories gathered betray a rich tapestry of lived experiences including

[4] There is a wealth of literature pertaining to peripatetic interviews which informed this element of my process. However, as conducting interviews while walking was contingent on the geographical location, physical ability, and inclination of my interviewees, rather than a fundamental strand of my methodology, it is beyond the scope of this paper to explore in detail in what ways this practice informed my oral histories.

fires, bomb scares, deaths, births, playing, parties and protests. In many cases, several generations of the same family, including my own, had worked in the theatre, providing a genealogical dimension to the building's palimpsestic nature. While many interviewees spoke of a deep, and sometimes singular, sense of belonging they felt as part of the Citizens community, one attendee of the theatre's extensive outreach programme stated that they believed the theatre had saved their life. These memories and experiences simultaneously integral to, and yet removed from, the theatre's acclaimed creative output demonstrate its social, cultural and political significance. My interviews sought to actively solicit memories and experiences of spaces that lay beyond, or even in direct contrast with, their intended use or function in an attempt to explore their narrative potential. Architect Nigel Coates, recognising the potency of the stories of space, writes in *Narrative Architecture*:

> *The various physical parts of a space signify as a result of the actions – and experiences – of the participant, who assembles them into a personal construct. The narrative coefficient resides in a system of triggers that signify poetically, above and in addition to functionality. Narrative means that the object contains some 'other' existence in parallel with its function. This object has been invested with a fictional plane of signification that renders it fugitive, mercurial and subject to interpretation.* (Coates, 2012, p.15)

Coates' preoccupation with the narrativity of space celebrates its multifaceted significance and makes room for numerous, overlapping and contrasting experiences, exploring the convergence of architecture, contemporary culture and the lives of real people. His notion of space is, like geographer Doreen Massey's, subjective, unstable and 'under construction' (Massey, 2005, p.9). From a performance perspective, similar investigations of space and site have notably been explored by scholar and practitioner Mike Pearson. He describes his 2006 publication *In Comes I* as being 'topophilic in attitude' (Pearson, 2006,

p.4) in reference to its preoccupation with every element that makes a place a place. This builds on his work on 'deep mapping' with Michael Shanks as expressed in *Theatre/Archaeology* which, he states:

> *(...) attempts to record and represent the grain and patina of a location – juxtapositions and interpenetrations of the historical and the contemporary, the political and the poetic, the factual and the fictional, the discursive and the sensual; the conflation of oral testimony, anthology, memoir, biography, natural history and everything you might ever want to say about a place.* (Pearson & Shanks, 2001, p.64)

As a creative, historiographical tool, my use of architexting embraces subjective, fluid and poetic experiences of space, utilising architectural processes to create pieces that express space as a lively tapestry of experiences, events and materiality. There is a tension in the temporal relationship between architexts and architectural drawings that provides some fruitful avenues for exploration. Architecture as a practice is inherently prospective in nature. Architectural drawings depict a space that does not yet exist. As Rendow Yee writes in *Architectural drawing – a visual compendium of types and methods*, 'They are a form of drawing the future' (Yee, 2013, p.227). At the time of creation, the building only exists on the page and in the imagination of the architect. In contrast, architexting is inherently retrospective. It is a practice that investigates how spaces are and have been inhabited. Its purpose is ultimately to understand the ways in which spaces are shared over time and how diachronic communities, connected by space, are formed.

As philosopher and academic Edward S. Casey writes:

> *Sites are prospective in character; they are sites for building, exploring, surveying etc. Places, in contrast, are retrospectively tinged: we 'build up' memories there, are moved by them in nostalgic spells, are exhilarated or*

> *get 'stuck' in them. In short, it is thanks to places, not to sites, that we are inhabitants of the world.* (Casey, 2000, p.195)

While architectural drawings depict imagined, prospective sites, architexts tell us something about the places they become.

Blueprint

In my first architext, *Blueprint*, I consider the dramaturgical potential of floorplans. As a tool for understanding the 'movement of people through space' (Schaller, 1997, p.118), the floorplan presents an opportunity to map sited histories onto the building's footprint to explore how these experiences of space relate to each other. In *Blueprint*, lines denoting the walls, doorways and staircases of the theatre building are replaced with verbatim text selected from the gathered oral histories pertaining to memories and events connected to the space they depict. The result is an alternative blueprint of the building that simultaneously represents both the tangible and intangible elements of the building. While the physical shape of the building is portrayed by formation of the words on the page, the content of these words reveals something of the incorporeal fabric of the building by presenting stories and memories attached to specific sites within it. Here, architect's Bernard Tschumi's definition of architecture as being 'the space and what happens in it' (Khan & Hannah, 2008, p.52) is expressed pictorially.

A key element of architexting is that it facilitates as a spatial historiography. By 'spatial historiography' I mean that precedence is given to spatial rather than temporal factors, encouraging creative, non-teleological approaches to exploring the plurality and simultaneity of multiple histories within a single building. *Blueprint* enables a spatial approach to historiography which takes space and site as its structuring principle, allowing moments and events recorded in a particular space to sit alongside each other temporally, as they do geographically, out with the bonds of chronology. With space as the holding point for a plethora of stories

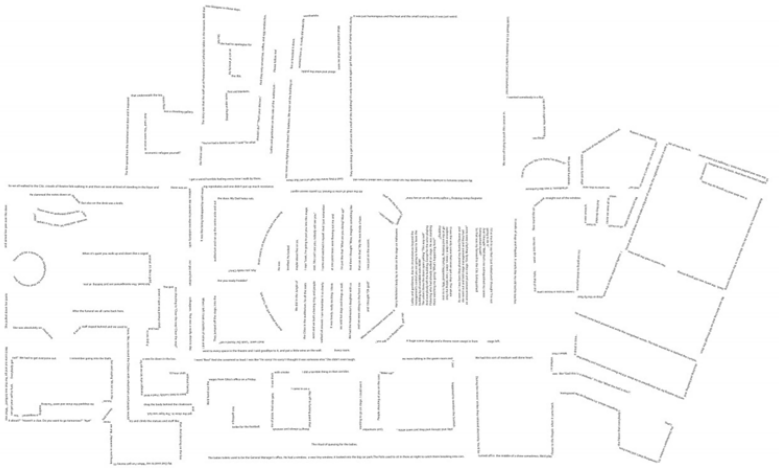

Figure 1. *Blueprint: Ground Floor*

as events, we can examine, weave, connect and collide experiences that share a location if not a temporal plane. In this practice, factors which may, aesthetically and creatively, appear as constraints, work to underpin this historiographic methodology. For example, the incredibly restricted space on the page with which to fill with text, means that the text included is necessarily fragmentary. As one observes the assemblage of quotes on the page, it is impossible to draw from them any dominant narrative. It is the building itself, or rather its blueprint, which is the only structuring principle of these disparate fragments, having determined which spaces, and therefore, stories, meet each other, and how much space is available on the page to tell each tale. Even within individual quotes, the incomplete nature of each prevents a 'full' disclosure of the story it refers to. At each point, *Blueprint* resists any totalizing view of the theatre's history and encourages a non-hierarchical approach by not prioritizing any particular memory or narrative, but rather the connections between different experiences,

celebrating their simultaneity and multiplicity. This leaves room for a multiple of routes through the script, allowing space for each microhistory and infinite readings of the text that will offer new insights and connections each time. This impossibility of gleaning a 'full' account of any experience represents the countless stories that have not, and will never be, heard, reminding the beholder that they are witnessing a sample of inevitably incomplete experiences and not a comprehensive account of the building's history.

As a script, *Blueprint* invites the performer/director/audience to 'treat it differently' (Turner, 2013, p.115). Each line may be spoken as dialogue or performed as a stage direction, but with no stipulation on sequence, tempo, duration, character number or plot, the text offers opportunities for countless readings and relies on the performer/director/actors to 'activate' or 'complete' it. This inherent incompleteness is purposeful and represents a key intersection between architecture and dramaturgy as explored above, particularly in relation to Tschumi and Fretton's concept of architecture as a continuous process that is temporarily 'completed' over and over again as users interact with buildings.

Conclusion

By exploiting the overlaps in purpose and process of playwriting and architectural practice, I propose that architexting can offer new ways to explore layers of history within buildings. Drawn from oral histories conducted with members of the Citizens Theatre community including artists, patrons and staff, these architexts perform as creative archives, capturing embodied and subjective experiences of spaces which are soon to be repurposed or lost entirely. By facilitating a spatial approach to historiography, architexting seeks to shake off the shackles of chronology and undertake diachronic explorations of spaces, allowing events, people and moments to collide and illuminate each other in a manner that would be impossible in a teleological historiographic approach. In my continued investigations of the scope and efficacy of this approach I will consider how this methodology can utilise architectural concepts to inform the

dramaturgy of new playscripts that explore, reveal and celebrate the hidden histories of the Citizens Theatre.

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THE CURVE IS RUINOUS: ARCHITECTURE AND THE PERFORMATIVE INTERVENTION *SPIRALS*

HARI MARINI

The way that city-spaces are shaped, produced and used entails choices that are entangled with social, political, moral, cultural and economic aspects and values. Architecture plays a significant role in the urban phenomena, since it can re-produce or challenge social roles and reinforce or discourage urban change. Therefore, we should re-consider how space is produced and for whom. As the Marxist philosopher Henri Lefebvre puts it: '(t)he analysis of any space brings us up against the dialectical relationship between demand and command, along with its attendant questions: "Who?", "For whom?", "By whose agency?", "Why and how?"' (Lefebvre, 1991, p.116).

Traditionally, in western societies, architecture tends to be a male-dominated profession – for example, in the UK in the 1980s, about 9 per cent of architects were women (Walker, 2003, p.244). Therefore, the processes of conceptualising, regulating and controlling space has largely been defined by male thought. In his innovative study *Skateboarding, Space and the City* (2001), Iain Borden recognises that although architectural historians have attempted to shake underlying conventions in architectural discourse, their work continues to 'remain within the architectural canon of such "great" male architects as Le Corbusier and Loos, consequently leaving the core object of study unchallenged' (Borden, 2001,

Figure 1. *Spirals* (London, Barcelona, Broadstairs, Belgrade, Coventry, Athens 2013-ongoing)

p.8). Preconceptions about matters such as, cleanliness, the meaning of 'home', the ambiguous distinctions between public and private space, the design of walkways, the plans of working spaces affect and are affected by concepts related to gender and identity. As the geographer Doreen Massey observes:

> *From the symbolic meaning of spaces/places and the clearly gendered messages which they transmit, to straightforward exclusion by violence, spaces and places are not only themselves gendered but, in their being so, they both reflect and affect the ways in which gender is constructed and understood.* (Massey, 1994, p.179)

In 1981, Leslie Kanes Weisman observes that although '(w)omen constitute over 50% of the users of our environments, yet we have had a negligible influence on the architectural forms our environments express' and urges that 'each woman

must become her own architect' (Weisman, 1981, p.8).

In this paper, I discuss how a performative intervention developed by female creators can potentially propose an architectural gesture that suggests an alternative way of engaging with the urban environment, its derelict spaces and architectural structures. I examine how space is conceptualised and produced by focusing on lines, walking, architecture and performance; and how, by the means of performance, imaginative spatial practices can contest rigid 'truths' related to space production and use.

I look at the performative intervention entitled *Spirals* created and performed by a group of female poets, artist and performers[1]. I have been working on *Spirals* with my performance group PartSuspended (www.partsuspended.com) since 2013 (ongoing). Although different aspects of the project – regarding its processes and outcomes – could form part of the discussion, for the purposes of this paper, I focus on the way that spiral lines created within the project oppose linearity and straight lines, and bring imagination, poetry and improvisation to urban space, whilst they open new possibilities of producing, activating and experiencing city-spaces. I argue that performance projects such as *Spirals,* reveal the poetics of spaces, and call us to re-think the value of performative gestures conducted by female artists especially in relation to architecture. Women artists *become their own architects* by creating their own the paths – literal and metaphorical – though walking, bodily gestures, or writing.

I will begin my discussion by analysing concepts related to straight lines that have governed and shaped modern architecture, and then I will continue the discussion by analysing the way that walking, performance and poetic gestures in ruined spaces can challenge those concepts.

[1] For further information about the project, images, video-poems please visit: https://www.partsuspended.com/productions/current/spirals/

The Curve is ruinous

Contemporary city planning and design principles of architecture have been affected by a range of issues emerging from the industrialisation of western cities during the 19th and 20th centuries and their consequent deindustrialisation. Problems such as the overcrowding of urban centres, which were not sufficient to serve the high number of population moving to cities; the lack of urban infrastructure and the demand for sanitisation of urban settings, required planning solutions that dictated concepts and practices that can still be evident in contemporary urban planning and architecture. For example, the improvement of the water supply and sewage systems, because of threats to public health[2], became a critical moment for urban planning and affected how cities were designed and functioned thereafter. The role of plumbing in cities' cleanliness and hygiene introduced by the architect Adolf Loos in 1898 was connected with modernity, verticality and order[3]. This had a powerful impact on modern architecture, which was mainly characterised by rationalised designs at the beginning of the 20th century.

A prominent architect who has influenced modern architecture was Charles-Edouard Jeanneret (1887-1965), known as Le Corbusier. Le Corbusier's projects and ideas as well as principles of the International Congress of Modern Architecture that he established, greatly influenced future architectural work. His concepts, his built projects, as well as his unfulfilled proposals had an enormous impact on architecture and urban design in the 20th century. Le Corbusier was a rationalist architect whose vision of city planning was based on strict geometrical values and emphasised the utilitarian side of architectural planning and designing.

In *The City of Tomorrow* (1924), Le Corbusier reinforced the idea of the ordered

[2] For a discussion on body, cleanliness and city design in the 18th century European cities, see Richard Sennett's *Flesh and Stone* (1994).

[3] Adolf Loos praised the plumber as 'the pioneer of cleanliness (…) the first artisan of the state, the billeting officer of culture, of today's prevailing culture' (Loos 1997, p.18). For Loos, the water usage and sanitation of the urban environment was an imperative for a culture that requests modern development.

city and he analysed the principles that should govern city planning. He asserted that 'a town is pure geometry' and '(w)hen man is free, his tendency is towards pure geometry. It is then that he achieves what we call order' (Le Corbusier, 1971, p.28). Le Corbusier, seeking perfection and order in architecture and urban planning, celebrated the straight line and the right angle. He said: 'a modern city lives by the straight line, inevitably; for the construction of buildings, sewers and tunnels, highways, pavements' (1971, p.16). He claimed that the right angle attains 'superior rights over other angles', it is 'lawful, it is part of our determinism, it is obligatory' (1971, p.27), whilst '(t)he curve is ruinous, difficult and dangerous; it is a paralyzing thing' (1971, p.16). Le Corbusier arrives at authoritarian conclusions that provide no escape from the idea of formality and functionality of the design, both in terms of domestic space and city layout. In his architectural vocabulary there is no flexibility, no place for the accidental, the contingent and the improvisatory. He attempted to regulate the complexity and the ever-changing character of cities.

Jane Jacobs passionately opposed orthodox city planning that followed Le Corbusier's principles. In her seminal work *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (1961), Jacobs opened a way of thinking about cities in terms of their liveability; how cities can become more diverse and respond to human visions and needs. Jacobs argued for diversity in the city since she believed that this would advance public life. She says: '(t)he ubiquitous principle is the need of cities for a most intricate and close-grained diversity of uses that give each other constant mutual support, both economically and socially' (1961, p.14). Jacobs raised crucial issues about making a city habitable, diverse and socially vibrant, which had been overlooked by trends that followed Le Corbusier's tradition.

Along the same lines, the architect Eileen Gray criticising the work of those contemporary pioneers of modern architecture, like Le Corbusier, objected the rationalised geometric forms and the machine aesthetic of modern architecture. In an interview in 1929, Gray states: '(t)heir desire for rigid precision makes them neglect the beauty of all these forms: discs, cylinders, lines which undulate

or zigzag, elliptical lines which are like straight lines in movement. Their architecture is without soul' (Gray, 1981, pp.71-72). Although for Le Corbusier the curve is disastrous, difficult and threatening, for Gray lines other than straight give soul to architecture. Gray emphasises the value of re-examining architectural models and freeing architecture from the dominance of the straight line.

Lines are associated with concepts and practices present in a variety of historical, cultural and anthropological contexts. In his seminal work *Lines: A Brief History* (2007), Tim Ingold discusses how 'the straight line has emerged as a virtual icon of modernity', whilst modern thought advanced a dichotomising dialectic that:

> *(...) associated straightness with mind as against matter, with rational thought as against sensory perception, with intellect as against intuition, with science as against traditional knowledge, with male against female, with civilization as against primitiveness (...) with culture as against nature.* (Ingold, 2007, p.152)

If we are seeking spatial practices and processes that are inclusive, that overcome futile distinctions between outsiders and insiders, that call for participation, sharing and community, then we should re-consider how space can be abstracted from concepts entangled with certainty, authority and linear progress. In the following section, I'm going to discuss how the practice of walking can challenge concepts dictated by the straight line, and can become an act of creation, of *poiesis*.

Walking as an act of *poiesis*

Walking as a mode of travel, but also as a spatial practice, encourages creative responses to urban space and generates critical reflection. Through its rhythmic movement, walking 'generates a kind of rhythm of thinking' and finds its place between 'being and doing' (Solnit, 2001, p.5), as Rebecca Solnit puts it. The

walker absorbs, translates, imagines and transforms the multiple stimuli of the environment; she/he reflects on space by being in it; walking and thinking come in tune, and support the walker's participation in a creative practice. Through walking we re-position ourselves within the cityscape; we experience city-spaces through various perspectives by being immersed in them, and we deepen our connection and comprehension of the physical space in which we live.

For Le Corbusier, '(m)an walks in a straight line because he has a goal and knows where he is going; he has made up his mind to reach some particular place and he goes straight to it' (Le Corbusier, 1971, p.11). The connection between straightness, reason, goal is clear in Le Corbusier's statement. Walking in straight lines from point to point avoiding deviation, hesitation, distractions, intuition, shapes the city-user's experience within a destination-oriented path. In this way, paths and streets are rendered to be merely 'connectors' (Ingold, 2007, p.75); they serve to connect destinations, not spaces that offer experience in themselves. According to Ingold, connectors are associated with transport, the main difference of which from wayfaring is that 'transport is destination-oriented' (2007, p.77). Thus, '(w)hile on the trail the wayfarer is always somewhere, yet every "somewhere" is on the way to somewhere else' (2007, p.81), the transported traveller 'who departs from one location and arrives at another is, in between, nowhere at all' (2007, p.84).

Although, in western contemporary cities, paths and streets often fail to grow organically within the city's net, I suggest that they still contain possibilities for wandering, exploring and creating. Despite the increasing effort of regulating all possible routes spreading in the city's net, walking remains an act dependent on the idiosyncratic movements of the individual that contests the city-space as imagined and materialised by urban planners and architects. Michel de Certeau defines 'walking as a space of enunciation' (De Cereau, 1984, p.98) that is performed by urban pedestrians. The pedestrian creatively tracks her/his route, whilst she/he breaks free from controlling routes and constraints of urban space. In his analysis on ordinary urban walking, de Certeau aims:

Figure 2. *Spirals: Genesis* by PartSuspended (London 2017)
https://youtu.be/AkVhf1BSMuo

> *(…) to locate the practices that are foreign to the "geometrical" or "geographical" space of visual, panoptic, or theoretical constructions. These practices of space refer to a specific form of operations ("ways of operating"), to "another spatiality" (an "anthropological", poetic and mythic experience of space), and to an opaque and blind mobility characteristic of the bustling city.* (1984, p.93, italics original)

Considering 'ways of operating' in contemporary society, de Certeau looks for a creative way of 'making'. 'The "making" in question is a production, a *poiesis* – but a hidden one, because it is scattered over areas defined and occupied by systems of "productions" (television, urban development, commerce, etc.)' (1984, p.xii, italics original), he says. Following de Certeau, we could suggest that walking is an act of creation, of *poiesis*. The walker produces new ways of 'making' the city through the gaps that emerge from the city's net, deviating from established

routes, conventional rules and dominating systems of production. Walking invites new possibilities of experiencing and reshaping the built environment and speaks something of the city.

Walking along spirals

Walking has attracted the attention of a variety of artists, as way of exploring the relationship between performance art and physical space. From Bruce Nauman's video performance piece 'Walking in an Exaggerated Manner, around the Perimeter of a Square' (1967-1968) to the landscape creations of Richard Long (see Long, 2009); and from Francis Alÿs's interventionist's *paseos* (walks) (see Godfrey et al., 2010) to Tehching Hsieh's 'One Year Performance 1981-82' (see Heathfield and Hsieh, 2009); walking has epitomised a human physical action, which at the same time carries artistic, political and social dimensions. In this section of the paper, I focus on the *Spirals* project (2013-ongoing), in order to discuss how the performative intervention *Spirals* generates an imaginative and poetic approach to walking in city-spaces and creates its own transitory architecture.

As we have seen straight lines have been praised by modern architecture, while meandering lines might have been perceived as a threat to order, authority, linear progress. However, I suggest that it is often through a winding course that walking becomes an act of creation and provokes a poetic experience of space. The act of moving and progressing in spirals and not in linear forms provides a way of being in tune with space and time. It is through curves and cyclical movement that the sense of place is created. As Kenneth Olwig argues: '(t)he "deliberative steps" that bring the peripatetic mind a sense of place and community are (...) inherently circuitous' (Olwing, 2002, p.22). Olwing compares the peripatetic progress with the act of marching, arguing that the peripatetic progress is 'topian' and 'does not parade us linearly to the steady beat of its drum but, like the spiral of a harmonic progression, allows us to return to, and regenerate, the places that give us sustenance' (Olwing, 2002, p.23).

The *Spirals* project crosses geographical borders and unites female voices in an exchange of languages, cultures, personal narratives and modes of expression. The spiralling walk adopted in the project acts as a sign of becoming, transforming and awareness. It challenges the idea of productive-linear time as well as the sense of linear progress, and attempts to make us re-think and return to 'places that give us sustenance'. In the project the spiral acts as a symbol of sharing, unity and reconnection; a symbol of (re)visiting the past and at the same time (re)thinking the present and (re)imagining the future. The symbol of a spiral can be found in nature and in countless ancient and contemporary artefacts; often representing evolution, transformation, rebirth, growth, lifecycles, fertility, cyclical forces and patterns of nature, as well as the movement from internal concepts and the inner self to the outer world and vice-versa.

For the project we have been collaborating with female poets, performers, musicians and video-makers. Through the performative gesture of making and walking along spirals, the project makes the transitory architecture of paths made by the female walkers-performers-poets-creators visible. The project has sought to articulate the female experience of time, path, migration, memory, home and sense of belonging in a poetic and imaginative way through live performance, performance on camera, poetry, experimental writing, music and video-making. Female performers created their own spiralling paths within ruined spaces in European cities and walked along them. They became their own architects by designing their spiralling route and moving along it. Their gesture stood in contrast to linearity and purpose-orientated built spaces.

The performers reflecting on the poems, which have been selected for the project, chose materials that were associated to images, words, feelings of the poems and at the same time were inspired by the location. Flowers, soil, chalk, corn, oranges, beans, flour, ice cubes, pieces of glass, feathers, fabric, coal, turmeric, foam, foil, cotton, tulle, net, wire were some of the construction materials used to build spiralling paths by the performers. A series of spirals winding in towards the centre of the route, or winding out towards the city were created inviting the

Figure 3. *Spirals: As If* by PartSuspended (Coventry 2019)
https://www.interimpoetics.org/interim-36-3/hari-marini

performers to inhabit them and walk along them. By walking along spirals the makers imagined and created their own poetic version of pathways within the cityscapes. Deriving from personal experiences, accidental encounters as well as poetic texts, the spirals created on the ground have invited creators and viewers to imagine lines and spaces differently.

Spiralling in ruins

For the *Spirals* project, PartSuspended group has worked, filmed and performed within leftover spaces in European cities, such as London, Barcelona, Broadstairs, Belgrade, Coventry and Athens. Each of these cities has been the place where the female poets, whose poetry has been integrated into the project, lived either temporarily or permanently.

Poems related to the notion of home, migration, memory, femininity, place and love have guided performers and audience to the experience of city-spaces

through the spiralling walk. The video-poems and live performances have been shown in a variety of venues and festivals, reaching out to diverse audiences, and different types of spaces, such as the Worker's Chamber in Novi Sad (Serbia) as part of DAN event, 'Seeing the Invisible', organised by BAZA–Spatial Praxis platform; the occupied self-organised Embros theatre in Athens (Greece), as part of International Video Poetry Festival organised by The Institute (for Experimental Arts) – Void Network; [SPACE] artist studios (London). Also, the group has run workshops open to the public, in which members of the public were invited to create their own spirals and poetic texts.

The majority of the spaces that have been used for performance and filming purposes were derelict, such Can Batlló in Barcelona (Spain), a former industrial complex textile factory; the ruins of the old Coventry Cathedral (UK); the ruined open-air theatre in Strefi in the centre of Athens (Greece); the backyard of the Kulturni Centar in Belgrade (Serbia); the seashore alongside the load-bearing wall in Broadstairs (UK) – the wall supports the cliffs on which the Kingsgate Castle (converted into flats) is located. I consider important to briefly discuss the function of ruined spaces and preconceptions related to dereliction, and how a performative intervention can make us think differently about rationalised categorisation of city-spaces and their functionality.

Ruined spaces are associated with disorder, ugliness and impurity; they disturb visual order and escape the rhythm of the city. They often signify a failure of the past, whilst their presence raises questions for the future. Mary Douglas's famous characterisation of dirt as 'a matter out of place' (Douglas, 1978, p.35) can also be applied to spaces of dereliction. Their proximity to shiny and new constructed structures makes their presence problematic. Although derelict spaces can be found in central locations of cities, they are considered as urban voids or wastelands (see Doron, 2000; Edensor, 2005). However, ruined spaces contain the 'promise of the unexpected' (2005, p.4) as Tim Edensor observes. They question dominant codes of smooth city-spaces and reveal 'the contingent, ineffable, unrepresentable, uncoded, sensual, heterogenous possibilities of

contemporary cities' (Edensor, 2005, p.19). Therefore, urban ruins provoke excitement, and in cases discomfort and confusion, and they challenge spatial conventions and our engagement with built spaces. They can act as spaces of counter-practice that offer an alternative way of experiencing and organising city-spaces and city-life. They provide possibilities of architecture and spatial practices that open up meanings and encourage poetry, imagination, play and multiplicity.

In *Spirals* project, the unanticipated encounters, routes and connections as well as the accidental blending of materials, objects, textures, levels and forms within the ruined spaces have informed the act of walking as well as the visualisation of the spiralling paths. The aesthetics as well as a sense of freedom that rundown spaces provide have contributed to imaginative approaches. Through the interaction of the performers with the ambiguous forms and unexpected material of ruined spaces, the project speaks something of the ambivalence and unpredictability of life in at least three ways. First, the decline of physical appearance, which contests ideas about durability and fixity of the built environment, highlights the unavoidable decay and ageing, and reminds of the connection between life and death. Second, the slow meditative walk in ruined spaces that stand still, projecting their slow and silent way of crumbling, highlights the value of resisting the speeded-up flow of the city and of rethinking time. Third, the immersion in ruined spaces emphasises the value of being open and attentive to the surroundings for this attention contributes to acquiring knowledge as we walk along paths; as Ingold puts it: 'knowledge is integrated along a path of movement' (Ingold, 2007, p.91, italics original).

Conclusion

Space is not a homogenous entity, seen from a one-point perspective, but it is the product of stories and processes – past and present – that call us to imagine the future. It is a synthesis of stories and routes, the endless combinations and versions of which confirm that 'the world is *not* ready-made for life to occupy. (...)

Ways of life are not therefore determined in advance, as routes to be followed, but have continually to be worked out anew' (Ingold, 2000, p.242 italics original). The *Spirals* project invites us to imagine city-spaces, lines, ruined spaces, time differently. It re-connects city-spaces with poetry and imagination through walking, spiralling routes, poetic texts, gestures and performance. In light of socio-political changes (and challenges) in Europe (financial crisis, immigration, displacement, Brexit etc), as well as the international women's movements, a discussion on the production of space and how creative practices can open new avenues into analysing and experiencing space becomes crucial. The *Spirals* project invites us to imagine city-spaces, lines, ruined spaces, time differently. It re-connects city-spaces with poetry and imagination through walking, spiralling routes, poetic texts, gestures and performance. It produces a shared space by creating a network of women across European cities, and attempts to challenge preconceptions in regard to socio-political and geographical borders and the use of space. The *Spirals* project emphasises the value of personal and collective experience in producing space, as well as the role of shared art practices within current sociocultural changes.

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VERTICAL KNOWLEDGE: EXPLORING THE POTENTIAL OF VERTICAL DANCE AS A SCENOGRAPHIC STRATEGY IN THE PERFORMANCE OF SITE

NATALIE ROWLAND

Introduction

In this paper I will discuss vertical dance as a scenographic strategy and the potential that offers for engaging the viewer with the environment in new ways. Focusing on vertical dance, I draw on Lawrence's definition and differentiation from aerial dance which encompasses a wider range of apparatus and technique. Lawrence situates vertical dance as dance that "takes place off the ground, against a vertical surface (commonly a wall) that becomes the dancer's 'floor'" (Lawrence, 2010, p.49). This definition locates vertical dance immediately in an environment that is defined by the perspective of the performer. Our understanding of the location, which may or may not be familiar to the audience, is manipulated by our intuitive knowledge of gravity and relationship with the concept of a 'floor'. Challenging the audience to consider a world where there is the opportunity for an alternative 'floor', to encounter the environment in a new way, is at the heart of this discussion. This paper aims to explore what happens when an audience encounters vertical dance, and what opportunities that presents for performance of site and architectural spaces.

New Knowledge

In November 2012 I experienced vertical dance for the first time, as part of a production of the 1589 Florentine Intermedi at the Brighton Early Music Festival. Located in the vast church of St Bartholomew in Brighton, the production featured two vertical dancers who appeared from the upper arches high on the walls either side of the main performance area. As they worked their way down to the ground they performed somersaults and appeared to fly as they ran along the wall and propelled themselves out into the space. In my role as a lighting designer, I was familiar with St Bartholomew's Church as I had lit several productions there. Built in 1874 and designed by Edmund Scott, the brick-built structure stands 135 feet high and comparisons have been drawn with the scale of Noah's Ark as described in the bible. The interior is vast and uninterrupted, with no cross beams, chandeliers or rood screen. The walls seem to extend impossibly high before meeting the eaves of the roof. In previous lighting designs in this space I had used powerful wash lights to illuminate the walls, but had only ever been able to reach the roof with lasers. There seemed a point at which the building became 'untouchable'. It seemed as though human occupants of this sacred space could occupy only the lower half. The performance during the Florentine Intermedi gave me, and the rest of the audience, an opportunity to 'touch' the higher levels of that building. During the performance (by Zu Aerial Dance) as dancers Hazel Maddocks and Lindsey Butcher touched the brickwork with their hands and their feet, I became increasingly aware not only of the height of those walls, but also their strength, their immovability and their texture. My own knowledge and understanding of brickwork, my own encounters with those very walls contributed to an embodied sensation of what it might be like to walk up there, how the bricks were the same. By entering into a kinesthetic awareness and empathy with the vertical dancers that experience was extended to feel the sensation of space between the walls. For the first time I had a sense of scale and a comprehension of the volume of air in the upper section of the building. At the time I couldn't articulate how or why I had gained

Figure 1. The Flock Project view from base of building. An image of 3 of the dancers from SimonÁg DanCircus and Firebirds Productions in a performance of The Flock Project. Viewed from immediately below the dancers and at the base of the building, the dancers use the space around the building tethered by rope lines

that new knowledge. It has only been through my research into scenography, the phenomenological method and a development of my own aerial dance practice that I have reached a point where I feel able to begin to articulate how that knowledge reached me – and how I think vertical dance can affect its audience's understanding of and relationship with site.

A Scenographic Strategy

Through a deeper understanding of the scenographic as "place orientation" (Hann, 2019), this paper proposes that vertical dance be considered a *scenographic* strategy that might be employed in site specific performance. Addressing the difference between scenography and the scenographic, Rachel Hann describes the ability of scenographic elements to orientate, while scenography is a crafting of scene or world (Hann, 2019, p.4). Orientation is a fundamental part of vertical dance, whether as a dancer or as a viewer. Both are led to foreground

their understanding of which way is 'up' and where is the ground. Through making those enquiries overt in their thinking, the natural order of the site is disrupted, opening opportunities for thinking about and looking at the site in a new way.

While 'up' and 'down' are clearly aspects of the site that are redefined, vertical dance also invites us to experience textures and structures with a fresh perspective. Batson and Wilson suggest that, "Humans are inextricably linked by their *potential* and what the environment affords them to do (Gibson, 1966). Environmental textures, structures and patterns are affordances" (Batson & Wilson, 2014, p.177). The affordances of site and architecture become extended when vertical dance takes place. No longer bound by the natural laws of navigation, or the architects design for the pedestrian or utilitarian use of the building, the dancer is able to encounter the site in a way not previously designed or considered. These affordances include an experience of surfaces and textures previously only encountered by eye. Meanwhile, the viewer is afforded a perspective that reorganises their understanding of the human/site relationship.

In June 2019 the Prague Quadrennial of Performance Design and Space took place with a site specific performance by SimonÁg DanCircus and Firebirds Productions of Hungary entitled The Flock Project. This vertical dance performance took place on the side of the hotel Mama Shelter in Prague, a 1960s brutalist style building just outside of the city centre. Located at a busy junction, the pedestrian experience of the site is focused on navigating the traffic and pathways and doesn't naturally encourage you to look up. If you do find the opportunity to lessen your focus on the hectic multiple pathways of people and vehicles, a wider view of the area is predominantly occupied by straight lines and blocky shapes. The site affords navigation, direct pathways and a sense of travel. The clean lines articulating direction and a sense of movement through. The hotel itself has landscaped exterior areas that providing seating for the bar restaurant, as well as general meeting grounds. While my experience of this area was very much focused on the horizontal plane and the many pathways,

lines and blocks contained within, The Flock Project extended the viewer's attention upward. In the beautiful June sunshine the towering concrete wall was contrasted sharply against the vibrant blue sky, the lines made crisp and strong. As the performers danced across this strong blocky surface the movement evoked thoughts of swooping birds, the soft edged, flowing, shifting shapes of clouds and the freedom afforded by the space previously unused. Due to the arrangement of the buildings in the area, the performance was visible from quite a distance away. When seen from afar the scale of the dancers against the imposing building reinforced further the sense of birds in flight.

Throughout the performance, the viewer is also aware of the lines that tether the dancers. These both reassure the viewer in regard to safety, but also contribute to the experience of the movement. They become a visual reference to the geometric and gravitational laws that govern the dancers despite their apparent weightlessness and flight. The arcs of rope are tested as boundaries and played against in a duet between air and surface, weight and flight.

As a scenographic strategy the performance serves as a means of animating the solid structures and lines of the site. It invites a reading of the environment that entangles the chaotic, generative shapes of nature with the linear pathways of construction. The importance of movement to this strategy as a processual way of being in and with the world, can be considered to be in the "co-constitutive entanglements of body and world" (Paterson, 2007, p.16) resonating with Doreen Massey's stance that space shouldn't be considered "static, closed, immobile" (2005, p.18), instead proposing a way of knowing that is dynamic and full of potential. A position that echoes site specific dance practice as the "shift in focus from architecture as being concerned with the building, to the intersection between place and event" (Sara in Hunter, 2015, p.64). It is through a concern with what the site *does* rather than what it *is* that the practices of choreography and scenography share a common ground.

Figure 2. The Flock Project view including Hotel Mama Shelter. Performed as part of the 2019 Prague Quadrennial, The Flock Project invited a new perspective on the brutalist structure

Audience engagement

As a viewer of vertical dance, I have found that the most effective tool in imparting new knowledge of a site is kinesthetic empathy. Reynolds and Reason's volume *Kinesthetic Empathy in Creative and Cultural Practices* (2012) articulates well the ways in which embodiment, kinesthesia and the science of mirror neurons function in art and performance practices as a means of communication and sharing of knowledge. As Reynolds notes in a previous volume, "Kinesthesia is informed by senses such as vision and hearing as well as internal sensations of muscle tension and body position" (Reynolds, 2007, p.185) and in a practice such as vertical dance, these mechanisms offer the viewer the opportunity to sense and experience in a way that they would not ordinarily encounter the world. Joslin McKinney explains how scenography functions in this way;

> *Recent scenographic practice, therefore, appears to reframe the role of the audience. Audience members are implicated physically as part of the scenic space and can, within limits, construct their own experience as participants through the ways in which they choose to interact with the scenographic environment.* (McKinney in Reynolds & Reason, 2012, p.222)

Through a kinesthetic empathy the viewer is able to project themselves onto the building or site. The movement of the dancers providing clues as to the nature of the surface, landings and momentum expressing the forces at play. As the dancers moved across the walls at Mama Shelter, the viewer became increasingly aware of the scale of the building, the distances involved expressed in the travel and pendulum distances of the movement. In each landing the viewer's body might sense the way that the limbs and torso respond, increasing their awareness of the immovability and strength of the wall and the amount of energy that the human body must dissipate in an encounter of landing. One could imagine what it might be like to jump on that wall, how much the knees would need to bend, what the sensation of pushing off through the feet might be like. This embodied knowledge contributes to the viewer's understanding of the site. Ordinarily unable to interact with the outside walls of the Mama Shelter structure they are provided with new information that helps them to build a sense of the site. In this way, the scenographic strategy of vertical dance contributes to the creation of a sense of architectural understanding. Sara notes the shifting nature of architecture as the location of place and event and the way that "use constructs the function, atmosphere and meaning of a place. When you change the function, atmosphere and meaning of a place then you construct architecture" (Sara in Hunter, 2015, p.62).

Vertical dance changes the function of a place by an irregular use of the space, but through the mode of performance it also changes the atmosphere. Kathleen Stewart writes of the close relationship between movement and the process of atmospheric attunements;

> *I am suggesting that atmospheric attunements are a process of what Heidegger (1962) called worlding – an intimate, compositional process of dwelling in spaces that bears, gestures, gestates, worlds. Here, things matter not because of how they are represented but because they have qualities, rhythms, forces, relations, and movements.* (Stewart, 2011, p.445)

This entanglement between movement, meaning and atmospheres is a key element of the way that vertical dance acts on the space and communicates with its audience. Stewart echoes Michel de Certeau in acknowledging the impact of considering space as a practiced place (de Certeau, 1984, Stewart, 2010) in which our understanding of the space is gathered through our encounters, the movement, the rhythms of the place. But this information is not only gathered visually. As previously mentioned, the effect of kinesthetic empathy enables the viewer to engage physically with what they are seeing, understanding what is seen through their body. While kinesthetic empathy remains a relatively new concept, artists, performers and philosophers have previously discussed the role of embodied knowledge. Brian Massumi notes the connection between vision and the rest of the body, suggesting that, "Vision only actually functions in a mixed or intermodal state. It is always fed into other senses and feeds out to them" (Massumi, 2002, p.154). Tim Ingold invites us to re-think how we understand the nature of vision in his discussion of weather (Ingold, 2011). While touching on embodiment, Ingold focuses on reframing our perspective to include movement as an integral part of understanding what we see. Discussing light as a mechanism for vision he states, "We do not perceive it, we perceive in it" (Ingold, 2011, p.138) and it is this infusion and envelopment that appeals to all of our senses. Massumi relates this to Giles Deleuze's concept of the haptic;

> *Vision has taken up a tactile function. It has arrogated to itself the function of touch. This purely visual touch is a synesthesia proper to vision: a touch as only the eyes can touch.* (Massumi, 2002, p.158)

In this way, through their visual engagement, the vertical dance audience is able to 'touch' the wall, to sense its surface and acquire new knowledge of the site. Drawing attention to the material surfaces, geometry and scale of the site, vertical dance can clearly be considered to function as place orientating, as scenographic.

Communicating the potential

But to what extent is this scenographic effect of vertical dance an intentional strategy? Drawing on conversations with vertical dance artists and some limited personal experience of learning basic vertical dance vocabulary, this paper suggests that the scenographics of vertical dance are very much in the minds of the performers and choreographers.

In learning vertical dance my own kinesthetic awareness was heightened in a way that was both physically and mentally demanding. A constant awareness of alignment, relationship to the wall, control of my position, fighting against the natural pull of gravity and inclination of my muscles. Through my own increased awareness of distances, trajectories and the forces of physics I began to understand why landings and interactions with the wall impart such a strong sense of knowledge to the viewer – these elements are all consuming. The dancer must concentrate and be present to these things and in this way I suggest the viewer cannot avoid a degree of understanding of the relationship between the dancer and the site.

Surface and interactions with it were a recurring focus during interviews with vertical dance artists. Thinking about what the surface consists of Chrissie Ardill considers, "ledges, corners, poles, windows" and notes, "I'll be approaching it with curiosity" (Ardill, 2019). Beyond the artistic and choreographic implications of the surface, Kathryn Cooley spoke about the technical considerations such as, "how the surface changes/reacts to heat, water, wind" (Cooley, 2019). Tim Ingold draws on Gibson in his discussion of the energies involved in surfaces;

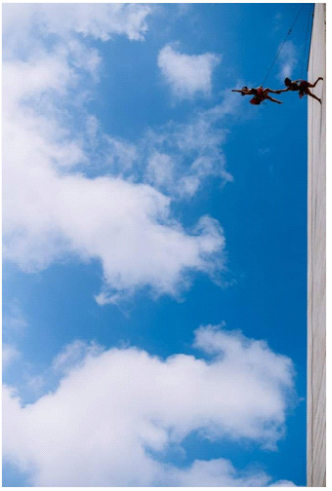

Figure 3. The Flock Project view from across the street. A wider perspective on the performance invites an appreciation of scale, composition and relationship with the wider environment

> *All surfaces, according to Gibson, have certain properties. These include a particular, relatively persistent layout, a degree of resistance to deformation and disintegration, a distinctive shape and a characteristically non-homogeneous texture. Surfaces are where radiant energy is reflected or absorbed, where vibrations are passed to the medium, where vaporisation or diffusion into the medium occur, and what our bodies come up against in touch. So far as perception is concerned, surfaces are therefore 'where most of the action is'*. (Gibson, 1979, p.23) (Ingold, 2011, p.22)

The surface as point of contact for the vertical dancer can be thought of as a 'body' with the particular properties Gibson notes, affecting how the site is approached and interacted with. These decisions and this relationship will in turn affect what is communicated to the viewer.

When asked in what way they felt the site affected how and what they

communicated to the audience, the responses suggested a very strong awareness on the part of the dancers with regard to the way that the whole site is viewed. Recognising the issue of scale, Ardill noted that, "regularly the audience aren't close enough to see our faces very well so that makes us slightly less human to them and makes them look more at the overall scene rather than zooming in on us within it" (Ardill, 2019). Following this vein of thought, Cooley explained the way that she considers the site to often function like "an editing tool or like a camera shot" in the way that the choreography is communicated to the audience. In recognising the way that the structures and layout of the site influence the visibility, scale and perspective received by the audience Cooley is thinking in a scenographic way about the performance. Considering the site as an editing tool invites a framing of vertical dance that is site specific (Hunter, 2015), site responsive (Hunter, 2015) and an act of place orientation (Hann, 2019).
Discussing the specificity of the site, Cooley noted that;

> *The site is everything. Buildings, walls, cliffs themselves can dance, are always dancing we are just there to draw peoples attention to it or to sculpt the movement in some way or another.* (Cooley, 2019)

This choreographic vision of the site begins to articulate the strong connection felt by the dancer to the rhythms and movements of the environment they are in. Movement is the foremost tool in the ability of vertical dance to communicate space and place, but this paper argues that movement does not only belong to the choreographic, but also to the scenographic. In a previous paper I suggested that the differentiation between the choreographic and the scenographic lies in what is being orientated. I suggested that the scenographic is, as Hann (2019) proposes, an orientation of place, while the choreographic is an orientation of the body (Rowland, 2019). Both strategies are at play in vertical dance and navigating these offers a strategy for deciding how and what knowledge will be shared with the audience.

Conclusion

This research has found that the scenographics of vertical dance are very much in the minds of the performers and choreographers, however the way that this is communicated to the audience often remains as a latent potential. Frequently classified and framed as spectacle, vertical dance is thus limited in its ability to communicate and reinvent place. However, when we consider the experience of watching vertical dance, the audience are clearly engaging with the architecture, landscape or site in a new way. They are encouraged to look up and to frame the location in a way that they are not likely to have done previously. Like the 'camera shot' the vertical dance performance tells the audience something new, it directs their vision and thereby their embodied experience of the site. The challenge facing vertical dance choreographers and artists is in elucidating this new experience of site. When understood not only as spectacle or as choreographic, but also as scenographic, vertical dance has the potential to become a process of worlding that communicates with its audience through a shared reframing of place.

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SETTING ARCHITECTURE IN MOTION BY MEANS OF PERFORMANCE

VIŠNJA ŽUGIĆ

Architecture: Unstable and Dynamic Phenomenon

The main problem with buildings is that they look *'desperately static'*, state Bruno Latour and Albena Yaneva in their provocatively titled essay 'Give me a Gun and I will Make All Buildings Move: An ANT's View of Architecture' (Latour, Yaneva, 2008). The static nature that this essay points to doesn't refer to the immobility of buildings in the physical sense, instead the authors advocate for understanding buildings as projects in movement, a series of transformations in the continuous flow. Through this viewpoint, they signify buildings as entities which are primarily *productive in space-time*. This position presupposes certain emancipation of architecture, from a mere backdrop for human activities to an interrelated and active entity. The conventional nature of architecture, observed as a neutral, passive framework in which the action takes place, is therefore surpassed, making it possible to establish the notion of architecture as an unstable, productive, and effective phenomenon.

Although Latour and Yaneva further focus their debate on the dynamics of a design process, the core of their theory is nevertheless relatable to exploring different levels of spatial transformations, especially in architecture's post-designed state. The themes of constant changes and transformations of space

understood as a *mobile* and plural phenomenon, and especially the temporary functions that architecture develops in these processes, represent the broader theoretical base for exploring architecture *as the problem of performing arts*. What makes this method legitimate is the standpoint that any artistic and non-artistic phenomenon can be regarded as the problem of performing arts if the exploration centres the problem of establishing, production and realisation of meanings (Vujanović, 2004). Thus, the idea that physical space can be regarded and explored *'as' performance* (Schechner, 2013 [2002, 2006]) opens up possibilities of focusing on how architecture enters different flows of production of meanings and becomes itself one of their active producers in these processes.

Spatial Performativity and the Productive Architectural Text

In the famous chapter of *Notre-Dame de Paris*, titled 'This Will Kill That', Victor Hugo announces the irrevocable *death of architecture*, that will arrive with the first invention of the printing technology. Through such a viewpoint he recognises the textual function of physical space as the one that essentially constitutes architecture. In a completely different context, referring to the moment five centuries after the one that Hugo writes about, Alberto Pérez-Gómez states that in the last two centuries the *'architect has indeed become a "writer" – implicitly or explicitly, a narrator of events'* (Pérez-Gómez, 1994, p.5). Through this immanent narrativity that has accompanied architecture throughout centuries, the architectural text is interpreted structurally – as a collection of signs that reflect specific, previously defined and consciously placed meanings. However, rethinking architectural text through post-structuralism, which sees text as determined by its *context*, brings into focus the process of its production (rather than representation) and its essentially unstable nature. This position indicates that the meaning of text is not inherently determined, but that *'each text is realised as intertextuality'* (Vujanović, 2006, p.32) – the notion coined by Julia Kristeva, which she describes as *productivity* (Kristeva, 1980, p.36). In this dynamic process of intertextual networks and dialogues, the established

meanings are inevitably produced, and their flows are to some extent unpredictable. Based on this (in)determination, intertextuality can be observed as a fundamental theoretical concept for exploring the phenomenon of spatial performativity. Architecture is now approached as post-structural text, which is understood as *an intervention in its surrounding semiotic context* (Vujanović, 2006), realised as a production of meanings in a specific moment in time.

Spatial performativity, understood through this specific model of the phenomenon, refers to the quality of space which often appears not as initially designed, but rather as acquired or gained through specific circumstances or contextual transformations. In that regard, several mechanisms which lead to the establishment of a performative space can be identified. They are determined by *intertextual effect*, which refers to meanings that are not immanent to the work (of architecture) but appear as a result of production in a context that is unstable, ephemeral and changeable. There are three relevant relations within which the intertextual effect occurs: (a) between space and its user (the relation that I define as the *mechanism of Confrontation*); (b) between space and elements of a staged event (through which I define the *mechanism of Correlation*); (c) between space and external inputs which influence its reading (a relation through which I define the *mechanism of Framing*). In establishing the phenomenon of performative space, all three mechanisms employ a productive architectural text.

Mechanism of Confrontation

The mechanism of Confrontation presupposes a conscious and controlled inscription of performative capacities into architecture by its designer. It focuses on how the architectural elements initiate the production of meanings in relation to the user/observer who is exposed to the space.

Theorising the perception of art, Donald Kunze emphasizes the importance of the viewer in constituting the overall meanings in the process of their production. Through this theory, the meanings are approached as not completely formed by the artist (author), quite the opposite, the author has to rely on the receiver of

the content, who, to some extent, 'finishes' the artwork through the process of reception. Similar viewpoints that originate from the field of performing arts deal with the position of the viewer: proposing one possible interpretation of performance as *'a way of seeing'*, which presupposes *'certain collaborative and contextual functions (between work and spectator)'* (States, 2003, p.118), or, emphasizing the role of an audience member in forming a common text of performance, which always exists, even if it doesn't include any spoken or written text (Jovićević, 2007).

Drawing a parallel with the perception of architecture, Kunze argues that the relation of *frontality* is of key importance. It does not refer to a physical position of an observer in front of a building, but to the imaginative displacement of the observer into the world of illusion, which essentially belongs to the work of architecture. Kunze marks frontality as the drive which makes *the participation in the realisation of the work of architecture* possible:

> *Frontality in architecture thus designates a moment in the encounter with a building where an act of fascination takes place. Fascination enables the client's interest to be displaced into the imaginative anticipation of the future recipient of the architectural idea (…). In this constitution, the identities of the architect and the recipient merge – or rather, it would be more accurate to say that the single identity of architect/recipient is born for the first time, out of its prior constituent parts.* (Kunze, 1994, p.106)

The concept of frontality can be read as a key theoretical concept through which the mechanism of Confrontation is understood. The act of fascination, which takes place during this process, brings into motion the productive mechanism, which Kunze refers to as the establishment of a unique entity of architect/observer. The confrontation of the viewer with space takes place in a limited period during which the resulted meanings, partly determined by the intention of the designer, and partly conditioned by the direct experience of the observer,

are being produced for the first time. Frontality in that sense is understood as a precondition for 'entering' the 'world' of architecture, which leads to activating the production of meanings through the mechanism of Confrontation, and finally, to the establishment of a performative space. One of the best examples of achieving spatial performativity through architectural design is the famous Jewish Museum in Berlin, by Daniel Libeskind (2001). It was designed to be perceived actively and productively by its users (rather than passively "reading" the space), thus inscribing the performative qualities of space already in the process of its conceptualisation.

Mechanism of Correlation

The mechanism of Correlation refers to the dialogically structured relationship between architecture as an envelope for action, and elements of a staged event brought into the analysed space.

An important presumption related to this specific context is that the physical space, to some extent, always achieves the role of a co-creator of meanings realised within the event as a whole, becoming one of its integral parts. The correlation between the space and a staged event refers to a synergy achieved between architecture and the elements of a performance (the body, movement, scenography, technology, etc.). The study focuses on physical space that envelopes an action, regardless of the spatial level that dominantly determines it (the building that hosts the event or the secondary level of scenography). Furthermore, the elements of a staged event could be reduced, for the sake of the theoretical argument, to their minimal form: a single performing body. This way, it is possible to observe interconnections between space and the body as a paradigmatic relation relevant to this mechanism.

Theoretically, the mechanism of Correlation relies on Jacques Lecoq's concept of *complicité* which, in his understanding, extends beyond its basic translation as togetherness, and refers to complicity, a specific form of collaboration between the participants in a performing event (Murray, 2003). Complicité is therefore

understood as an abstract category, a quality that refers to a tacit agreement, nonverbal communication, a certain kind of unstated understanding. As a form of instinctive communication, it signifies a precondition, as well as an outcome of a successful staged event.

Regarding the mechanism of Correlation, the main question refers to the possibilities of achieving complicité between space/architecture and body/movement. If it is the quality accomplished between the participants of a successful staged event, and the physical space is possibly approached as one of the event's integral elements, then complicité can be observed as the value which appears in a successful correlation between the space and the body. This quality is reflected through the establishment of an active dialogue and the integration of the two entities. The paradigmatic example of this relation is found in Trisha Brown's performance 'Man Walking Down the Side of a Building' (1970). The 'merging' between the building's façade and the body of the performer, produced by their mutual dialogue, happens on the level of the performance as a whole. In that sense, complicité is understood as a goal of the intertextual weaving of the physical space and a staged event, and at the same time, as an outcome of establishing a co-performative function of space, related to this context.

Mechanism of Framing

The final mechanism, of Framing, activates the performative capacities of architecture to a certain extent indirectly. This mechanism presupposes the existence of external factors, conditions or contextual determinations, which, in a limited interval of time dictate the ways the architectural space is perceived. The notion of *framing*, in the context of performing arts theories, refers to the way an activity is contextualised and brought into focus (Pavis, 1998). In relation to performativity of architecture, specific conditioning of space takes place due to the *frame*, a contextual system which focuses the attention to a certain (spatial) phenomenon, and structures it in the domain of its meanings.

The notion of frame was coined by Erving Goffman, a sociologist who explored

the *'principles of organization which govern events – at least social ones – and our subjective involvement in them'* (Goffman, 1986, pp.10-11). Through a detailed frame analysis, Goffman proposes a methodological approach for exploring how the interpretative frames shape social interaction. Especially important for the process of framing architecture is the notion of key, as a central concept of frame analysis, and its verb *keying*, which Goffman defines as:

> *(...) the set of conventions by which a given activity, one already meaningful in terms of some primary framework, is transformed into something patterned on this activity but seen by the participants to be something quite else. The process of transcription can be called keying.* (Goffman, 1986, pp.43-44)

Moreover, the characteristic of the described transformation is equally important: *'the systematic transformation that a particular keying introduces may alter only slightly the activity thus transformed, but it utterly changes what it is a participant would say was going on'* (Goffman, 1986, p.45). In other words, the subject of transformation (in this case, the material properties of space) doesn't necessarily have to change, or usually inconsiderably changes its characteristics in the physical reality, but the way it is understood, perceived, experienced and interpreted, becomes significantly changed in comparison to its basic meaning, determined by the primary frame. This principle is of great importance for understanding the mechanism of Framing, in the function of performative activation of architecture. It doesn't necessarily undergo any visible material changes on a physical level, but the (transformed) meanings it produces are guided by the interpretative key imposed on its viewer. Within this context, the key is understood as a means, an external circumstance that influences the production of meanings through a specific way of contextualising architectural space. The application of this mechanism is most notably seen in the series of performances 'Remote X' by Rimini Protokoll. It utilises existing urban spaces, and temporarily changes their meanings, transforming them into one of the actors of these performances.

Performative Spaces and Aesthetic Communication

Single mechanisms that generate the performative function of architecture (of Confrontation, Correlation, and Framing) can be discussed in analogy to the notion of *aesthetic communication*, defined by Ronald J. Pelias and James VanOosting.

Through defining this notion as a certain kind of practice, the authors have identified the contours of the field of research relevant for performance studies. The analysis focuses on text – understood in this context not only as a written text but as a broad phenomenon – and the conditions under which it achieves aesthetic communication. The problem is decomposed through three theoretical lines: (1) the theories that regard the *use* of texts which are in advance defined as aesthetic, and as such placed in society. Here the initiator (a performer) establishes a certain event with an intention for it to be perceived as aesthetic; (2) the theories focused on *qualities* that determine certain phenomena as aesthetic. In this case, the event (the text) possesses certain qualities that are generally seen as aesthetic, regardless of the intention of the 'performer' or the perception of 'audience'; (3) the theories that explore the *effects* or *reactions* that certain phenomena produce in the process of their reception, due to which they are interpreted as aesthetic. In this case, the one that perceives or reacts to the event initiates his/her role as an audience member and reacts to the event as a performance (Pelias, VanOosting, 2003).

Defining these three conditions, aesthetic communication of a text may be achieved from any of the perspectives – of a performer, text or audience. Analogically observing how performative spaces achieve aesthetic communication, what is referred to here as a broad notion of text can be regarded as textuality of architecture and its physical elements. Therefore, the mechanisms of achieving the performative function of architecture can be seen through the following analogy:

perspective of a performer –› aesthetic intention –› mechanism of Confrontation
perspective of a text –› aesthetic quality –› mechanism of Correlation
perspective of audience –› aesthetic effect –› mechanism of Framing

Following the perspective of a performer which presupposes an aesthetic intention, it is possible to position the mechanism of Confrontation as its corresponding match. It refers to the physical space of architecture, or the architectural text, which is designed with an intention to communicate aesthetically, or, to be performative.

The perspective of a text refers to its specific aesthetic qualities, regardless of the intention of those who happen to be in the role of a performer or audience. The mechanism of Correlation, placed in analogy to this position, refers to certain spatial qualities that are under some circumstances recognised and used as performative. In that limited period, architecture achieves its performativity through the specific use of space, independently (or despite) of the initial intention of its designer.

The perspective of the audience relates to the theories that explore the effects of certain phenomena, where the observer inscribes some qualitative relationships into them, and from his/her position presupposes the aesthetic communication. This position is connected to the mechanism of Framing, which relates to activating the external inputs that condition the experience of architecture as a performative entity.

Theoretically, it is possible to observe the defined mechanisms through the typology of the conditions necessary for aesthetic communication. Within the actual architectural, artistic and social practices, however, the single mechanisms don't exist necessarily as isolated. On the contrary, they are most often interrelated, appearing in a complex and dynamic coexistence.

Conclusion

Rethinking architecture as a collection of time-spaces, as opposed to one finished physical outcome, displaces the attention from the process of conceptualising architectural spaces, towards the flows that architecture enters in its post-designed state and exploitation. The themes of instability, change, process, movement, transformations and effects of architecture, have been recognised

in the inscription of textual practices into the built environment, which lead to accomplishing spatial qualities beyond those purely utilitarian.

The problem of production of meanings has been formulated as the basic criteria for the accomplishment of architecture as a performative entity. Architecture was observed as the problem of performing arts and the phenomenon that belongs to the extended field of performance – *one which is not a performance but can be performative*. Three distinctive mechanisms of accomplishing performative architectural space were identified: (a) *the mechanism of Confrontation*, which is realised through architectural space as a collection of elements designed with an intention to make the observer/user an active accomplice in finishing its overall meanings; (b) *the mechanism of Correlation*, which focuses on relations between architecture and elements of a staged event. In this context space surpasses the limits of a neutral framework, and becomes a co-creator of the overall meanings of the performance; (c) *the mechanism of Framing*, which refers to a specific way of conditioning the perception, understanding, and interpretation of space. Thanks to the frame that belongs to the realm outside the designed space, its primary meanings are transformed towards generating an active, performative entity.

The approach shown in this research was developed in order to point to the existence of the dynamic phenomenon of performative architecture, where physical space is seen *'as an initiator, generator and a protagonist of the newly created story'* (Zeković, Žugić, Stojković, 2019, p.58). The final destinations for the practical application of the research outcomes range from designed to spontaneous physical structures, from planned to subsequently generated uses of space, and from permanent to ephemeral, temporarily constructed and inscribed characteristics and qualities of space.

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URBAN SPACES

HOW DID MY PARENTS GET TO THE UNDERPASS? EXAMINATION OF A NON-THEATRICAL PERFORMANCE IN AN URBAN PUBLIC SPACE

GABRIELLA KISS

In this paper I would like to examine my scenography project, a *non-theatrical performance* which occupied a real space: in a half-abandoned underpass, in the heart of the capital of Hungary, Budapest. I focused on the questions of site-specificity regarding this.

The notion of *'site-specific'* is widely used today in the field of performance, because it encompasses a wide range of activities: in a sense, every event, including performative ones, could be called *'site-specific'* because it utilises the physical capabilities of the place in which it is created. It is also commonly used for theatrical performances that leave the stage of the proscenium theatre and find a place for the performance outside the traditional theatre building.

I wanted to narrow down this terminology, so I was looking for a proper interpretation. Carlson wrote that the only performances that can be considered *'site-specific'* are those in which the performance is based explicitly and exclusively on the visible (physical) and non-visible (different aspects such as historical, sociological, etc.) aspects of the chosen place and *cannot be separated* from them without damaging its meaning (Carlson, 2012).

The question was: how could this apply to the interpretation of my chosen place, the underpass? In the architectural sense, this place was an empty, decaying,

poorly lit underpass under the ground, where people walked hastily, without stopping. At the first glance, it didn't seem as if it contained any remarkable non-visible story.

While researching this question, I found McLucas' conceptual trinity of *"The Host, Ghost and Witness"*. This helped to answer questions that arose. The notion was created by Clifford McLucas, who was the Art Director and scenographer of the Welsh theatre company of *Brith Gof*. The concept was developed by his directing and scenography design experience of the performance *Tri Bywyd* (*'Three Lives'*). Adopting his conceptual triad, I began to examine the questions that arose in my scenography project.

The Host

The notion of *"Host"* covers the chosen *place* of performance. This is the (physical) location of the performance (*'locus or place'*) that *'embodies a complex, inter-related network of knowledge and narratives'* (McLucas, 1995. May: Brith Gof Archive – part of a manuscript – PL/9.). But what kind of narratives were embodied into my chosen place?

The decaying underpass was under the ground, like a *'time-capsule'*, a buried memory, in contrast to the freshly renovated urban environment at the top. The underpass formerly had a completely different function.

At the time of its inauguration in 1976, the underpass functioned as kind of a grand 'underground mall': glittering high-tech interior design spaces, small shops, and on one wall a long line of phone-boxes, all hidden under the ground. The underpass was part of a once large-scale construction that was intended to show the magnitude of the socialist dictatorship that 'resembled the Western world'. It used to be the case that people slowed down, had a look around, or even made purchases while being able to interact and communicate with each other.

Today it has lost this function: the shops have closed and people no longer stop, just hastily walked through. Nowadays certain materials/architectural elements

Figure 1. The freshly renovated urban environment on the top

(toughened glass handles, chrome hinges, glass portals, etc.) remain in their original condition of 1976, but some parts of the space are in various stages of decay: the broken shop-windows have been replaced with wooden pallet and the broken entrances of the shops have been covered with iron bars. Because of the special mixture of these two, the space functioned as a *'time capsule'*. The presence of the original relics was strongly evocative of the decaying space. Their materiality carried a history and gave insight into a once-existing world.

This place (the underpass) in a certain sense looks like a field of an archaeological digging area. The present state of the underpass shows a deteriorating urban public space, the fragments of the former past: the glass handles, chrome hinges and glass portals, material evidence testifying to a society that once existed.

Figure 2. The decaying underpass under the ground

These artefacts, the traces of the past, the 'archaeological evidence'[1] (Pearson and Shanks, 2001, p.9) *"must be set in the context of the society that produced it, rather than allowed to simply stand on its own and speak for itself. And this context includes also the past in the present"* (Pearson and Shanks, 2001, p.xvi). This new aspiration in the field of archaeology pointed out:

> *(...) that archeology is more than recovery and examination of the material remains of societies and cultures. The archeological is held to be a dimension of social practice, referring to the articulation of people and things and the material processes they undergo and witness. In particular the archeological concerns the material presence of the past.* (Pearson and Shanks, 2001, p.69)

[1] *'Archaeologists do not primarily deal with texts. They deal in words – the books and articles they write; and images – the plans, drawings and photographs. But their evidence is material; their subject-matter events, environments, and the traces left behind'* (Pearson and Shanks, 2001, p.9).

My scenography was based on using this feature of the underpass. I researched how could I find a meaningful story which was based on this evidence. The socialist dictatorship when these objects were made is very distant from us, and the stories of this time were just tales for people who were born after the revolution of 1989, when this regime of dictatorship was terminated. My questions led me to find *personal* stories which could become 'Ghosts' of this underpass. I hoped that these would enable people to explore and bring closer certain layers of meaning of the underpass through their personalities of the stories.

The Ghost

According to McLucas, the story (or stories) of the performance hold the *"Ghost"*. A congruent or incongruent relationship may arise between the *'Host'* and the *'Ghost'*, and this 'may occur at any one of a number of levels including theme or content, or the format interface of existing and newly created architectures' (McLucas, 1995. May: Brith Gof Archive – part of a manuscript – PL/9.).

To this statement, McLucas adds, there is no complete congruence between *'Host'* and *'Ghost'*. In other words, there will always be a kind of distance[2], a 'gap' between the two, even if this is based on some very similar and sensitive relationship. McLucas suspects that one of the reasons for this is perhaps because this relationship is (depending on the given theatrical semiotic situation – *my comment) 'dynamically changing rather than permanent and static'* (McLucas, 1995. May: Brith Gof Archive – part of a manuscript – PL/9.).

Based on this, I examined, how aspects, 'layers' of the place could relate to the story which is 'ghosted' in them. The socialist dictatorship was flourishing in the 70s when the underpass was built, but behind the greatness were individual human destinies forced onto a pre-determined path, which drew a completely

[2] *(…) In fact it is arguable that congruence is never possible (and that an illusion of it is only achieved by a kind of flower arranging of "seemliness") and that incongruence is always the result of such a coming together.* (…) (McLucas, 1995. May: Brith Gof Archive – part of a manuscript – PL/9.).

Figure 3. Original toughened glass handle in the underpass

different picture of the era. To reveal this hidden content, I interviewed my parents about their life during this time, and after this, another world was uncovered through the personal family interview. Despite the fact I made the interview with them separately, both of them told the same story. They talked about completely different things to what we heard in the propaganda of the socialist dictatorship. They talked about deprivation, lack of housing, moving permanently and lots of continuous and hard work. I decided to put *their personal stories* into the underpass. I realized my goal was to change the abandoned place to a live one and get closer to the spectators by allowing them to experience my parents' personal stories.

As you see, the visible fragments, the decaying objects, the 'layers' of the architectural past, *'the Host'* is connected to *'the Ghosts'* the 'layers' of two individual stories. These stories are lost to the present because they came from people who were still young when they lived in the 'golden age' of the underpass,

Figure 4. *'Praesenoscop Augmented Reality Boxes'* in the underground

which has already been lost. The answer lies in the relationship between the archaeological approach and the *performative event* because both of them generate socio-cultural narratives. The *'archaeological imagination constitutes a kind of dramaturgy'* (Pearson and Shanks, 2001, p.68).

Witness

The third element of this trinity of concept is the spectator (*"Witness"*).

My project was planned in an urban space, where the place of the performance was used both by everyday passers-by and the spectators. So, in this case, it was not clear who the spectators really were.

The title of this performative event was *'I Don't Live Different Than You'* and it was described as a 'short city adventure tour'. The participants were invited by a virtual tour guide – through a text on headphones – from the building of the 'FUGA' (Contemporary Architecture Centre) to the underpass. The spectators

were walking through a brand new square while listening to the introductory text, and in about five minutes arrived to the entrance of the underpass. Until the spectators arrived in the underpass, it was not possible to distinguish them from passers-by.

There the participants were 'welcomed' by three imaginary objects, three transformed old cardboard shoe-boxes endowed with meaning in the theatrical context. I used the technology of *Augmented Reality* (AR) in my scenography design in a playful way. AR technology is capable of revealing objects which are not present in the physical sense of the word. I did not use the real technology of AR, because I wanted to just play with this well-known technique, and used the AR interface – the old redesigned cardboard boxes – as a 'magical object'. The *'Praesenoscop Augmented Reality Boxes'* were filled with individual stories.

The photos on the transparent plexiglass in the shoe-boxes – like a popular *diaporama* technique in the 70s – could be manually moved by the spectators, while they were listening to the personal stories. The dramaturgically staged narrative revealed the moments of life stories of a family – a young husband and his wife. They were talking about the same situations from their two points of view. I asked two young actors to tell the text: their young voices brought the stories to the present. Their stories provided an individual description of the darker side of the socialist dictatorship.

During the performance, the passers-by paid attention to the spectators.

The spectators could see the passers-by, through the transparent *'Praesenoscop Augmented Reality Boxes'* and they were also watched by the everyday passers-by, who went through the underpass during the performative event. *"Performance generates two orders of narratives: the narratives of the watchers and the watched"* (Pearson, 1992: Brith Gof Archive – part of a manuscript – GL/18: 3.), as Pearson wrote in his manuscript. That means, in this case, that spectators could move the plexiglass in the cardboard boxes, based on their inner rhythm, and they could connect their own previous individual memories and history. The underpass meant something different to every spectator, and the scenography

installation left that opportunity open. There was thus no possibility that the performative event would mean the same thing for any two people.

The spectators listened to the stories of the two protagonists through headphones. They looked at the pictures in the cardboard boxes, and dozens of people walking through the underpass with *their own* stories.

The *individual story* or *stories* that were created moving through the place cannot be repeated again and because of this, the underpass is always in a state of change. The place, the underpass was a 'non-place' in the sense of *Augé*[3], because it was just a gateway before the performative event. That means, it was always in the moving of people, the passers-by who used this path every day. *'The traveller's space may thus be the archetype of non-place'* (Augé, 1995, p.86). Nevertheless, it gave a temporary meaning in the frame of the performance. Present and past, individual and day-to-day were connected in the ephemeral time-frame of the performance.

The performance which was created was able to connect the socio-historical and socio-cultural threads and memories of a particular place in a *'real-time presentation and representation'* (Pearson and Shanks, 2001: 55). McLucas called this notion *'a strange hybrid of architecture and event'*, and he created a name for this new, hybrid form, calling it *'architectureeventspace'* (McLucas, 1998. November: Brith Gof Archive – part of a manuscript – GL/2: 13.)[4].

The site of the 'performative event' is referred to as *'heterotopia'* by Shanks, as a kind of a unique field of force that, through *liminality*, can connect cultural traces of memory 'out of place' or in a 'transitional space'. *'Liminality'* means

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[3] *'(...) clearly the word 'non-place' designates two complementary but distinct realities: spaces formed in relation to certain ends (transport, transit, commerce, leisure), and the relations that individuals have with these spaces. Although the two sets of relations overlap to a large extent, and in any case officially (individuals travel, make purchases, relax), they are still not confused with one another; for non-places mediate a whole mass of relations, with the self and with others, which are only indirectly connected with their purposes. As anthropological places create the organically social, so non-places create solitary contractuality'* (Augé 1995, p.94).

[4] This idea is closely related to Bernard Tschumi's theoretical viewpoint of 'architecture and space'. In his view, the architectural space and the event that occurs in it, are in a relationship. *'(...) architecture is both about space and the events that take place in that space'.*

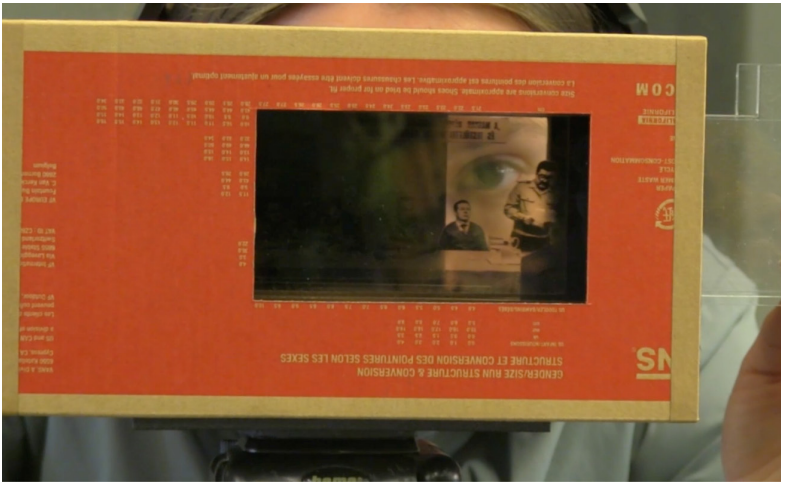

Figure 5. Photos on the plexiglass. One of the three *'Praesenoscop Augmented Reality Boxes'*

a state of transition where the original structures are overridden and the state of change may result in the developing of new forms. The *'liminality of the performative event'* enables those historical threads to connect and interweave that are capable of creating new, structural relationships (Pearson and Shanks, 2001, p.55).

This 'ephemeral event'

> *(...) (m)eaningfully constituted, 'on purpose', extremely generative of signs (every aspect is capable of semanticization), performance may resist (linear) 'readability', particularly if it makes no 'direct appeal' (operative awareness of the presence of watchers) to the outside. Its richness of meaning(s) is only partly controllable: performance is more or less suggestive/cognitive according to the expectation/experience/background of the watcher.* (Pearson, 1992: Brith Gof Archive – part of a manuscript – GL/18: 1.)

In this case, the 'urban landscape' was transformed by the spectators (and the everyday passers-by) in the timeframe of the performative event.

This *site-specific performance* is created in a complex, temporary space on the borderlands of the arts of *'performance, architecture, land art, installation, and multimedia'* (McLucas, 1998. November: Brith Gof Archive – part of a manuscript – GL/2: 4.). McLucas emphasizes that the concept of *'site-specific'* does not only mean that the venue of the performance is simply outside the theatre building, *'(…) but (...) goes further and engages with that site and integrates place and event to create a hybrid of architectural installation and performance. (…)'* (McLucas, 1995. May: Brith Gof Archive – part of a manuscript – PL/9.). Removed from the restrictions of the traditional theatre space, where the relationship between the performance and the viewer is automatically defined (even physically), site-specific performances are related to multidimensional reality.

In this space the constraining presence of defining new relations takes shape: *'between viewers as individuals and the audience as a mass; between viewers as individuals and the performers, between the mass and performers; between performers and performers'* (McLucas, 1998. November: Brith Gof Archive – part of a manuscript – GL/2: 21.). The audience arrives in the site-specific performance space not with the supposed expectation that they would have in a traditional theatre, so their presence must move in a dynamic relationship with the other two members of the conceptual trinity, the *Host* and the *Ghost*. McLucas sees the audience as the *'amplifiers'* or *'resonators'* of the piece (ibid: 21). This trinity is created within the limited time-frame of the performative event. The three reinforce each other's effects.

The project I have just described has created a possibility for me to find a place for a performative event in a public urban space. This essay sets out this *space-exploring*, and it was just a small slice of the initiatives created over the last twenty years in classrooms and gyms of former school buildings, movie theatres, industrial buildings, or on sites that have lost their original function. Leaving

the traditional theatre building, the fixed relation of stage and auditorium ceased to be: in the new sites, spaces changed into three or four dimensions. Every attempt – with its solutions to spatial modification – aimed to bring spectators and the events of stage closer together: moving across the boundary into each other's spaces, making the two poles palpable and more sensitive to each other. The requirement of change created *fundamental changes* in the traditional theatre system. Leaving the two-dimensional space and thinking in three or four dimensions, the previously immobile relationship lost some stability. The new situations have generated a presence demanding the definition of new relationships.

This study focused on the questions of place, space, and site, and the issues of how could I find and reveal the 'layers' of the place – the "layers of meaning" – that could serve as the basis for the planned performance. The *'Ghosts'* of the planned performance and the chosen layers of meaning of the place may be interrelated, but it could (also) be a very distant relationship, and the 'specific' place requires a special attitude from the scenography designer, one which may be different from a designing for a traditional proscenium stage.

The city is constantly in motion. Shortly after documenting and filming the plan of the performative event, one of the underground stores was rented again by a small matchbox dealer who had been there in the 70s in the underpass. A new story is being formed between the walls…

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THE USE OF SCENOGRAPHIC INTERVENTIONS FOR SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT IN CONTESTED PUBLIC SPACES: THE CASE OF THE SOUTH WALLED CITY OF NICOSIA

MARINA HADJILOUCA

Introduction

In March 2017, design academics Ezio Manzini and Victor Margolin, wrote an open letter to the design community inviting us to "stand up for Democracy", and to recognise the strong convergence between democracy and design. These convergences were listed through four distinctions:

> *1. design of democracy, improving democratic processes and the institutions on which democracy is built; 2. design for democracy, involving issues of access and transparency, allowing more people, especially using technology, to participate in the democratic process; 3. design in democracy, including projects that help to bring about conditions of equality and justice; 4. design as democracy, whereby the equitable and inclusive principles of participatory design set a stage on which diverse actors can come together to share constitutive power in shaping the present and future world we live in.* (Manzini, Margolin, 2017)

Design in Democracy refers to all the design initiatives that are particularly responsive to the goals of democracy. In previous writings Manzini (2013, 2015) discussed the importance of a designer and how they can act as 'trigger' to

start new social conversations; designers can operate as key factors by designing with and designing for communities. Through the use of creativity designers can 'make things happen', and therefore further develop and sustain the social conversation in place-making and developing the urban.

For the last decade most of the 'public places' that have been built in Europe, are private, based on shopping, coffee-shop culture, finance centres and apartments (called POPs, an abbreviation for Privately Owned Public spaces), with clear rules about who is, or is not allowed in, and what they can do there (A. Minton, 2009). However, the public space that I am focusing on, Phaneromeni Square, a square in the south walled city of Nicosia, is more complex than the POPs found in Europe and in the USA. Although Phaneromeni Square, shares many characteristics with POPs, has recently been affected by the gentrification process that the wider area has undergone, and is now exhibiting characteristics of privatization (see practice component), is also part of a complex urban milieu. This is due to its strong socio-political history linked to the ethno-national conflict in Cyprus, its unique position within the divided city of Nicosia and its proximity to the buffer zone (Figure 1).

When Sharon Zukin (1995) discussed the importance of public spaces, she pointed out that they are the primary site of public culture. They are the places where strangers meet but they also constitute an arena for continual negotiation of the boundaries and markers of human society. Public spaces constitute the social and political arena for different groups to become visible and heard, thus essential to the functioning of democracy. The availability of such space is under threat, and by overlooking the need for public spaces where democratic performance can be exercised, we run the risk of undermining some important conditions of democracy in the modern world (Parkinson, 2012). The privatization of public space entails increasingly alienation of people from the possibilities of inherent social interactions and increasing control by powerful economic and social actors over the production and use of space (Mitchel, 1995).

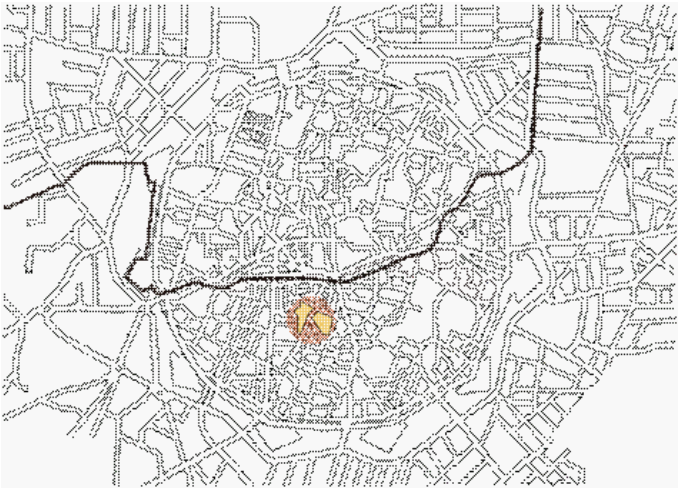

Figure 1. Map of Walled city of Nicosia, demonstrating location Phaneromeni Square and buffer zone. Source: author

1. Phaneromani Square

In order to acquire a better understanding on the complexity aforementioned we should look at the ethno-national conflict which took place in Nicosia during the previous century. Following the inter-communal or ethno-national conflicts in 1963, the walled city was divided by the United Nations, in Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot quarters with a buffer zone, or what is called the 'Green Line' in the middle. As a result of the Turkish troops invasion and occupation in 1974, the walled city fell into decay and the centre that was the most vibrant and commercial area turned into a no man's land. The citizens felt unsafe to be near the green line and developed their businesses in the northern and southern outskirts of the city respectively (Calame et al., 2009). Following the first three decades after the Turkish invasion the unoccupied old city was mainly inhabited by immigrants and rarely frequented by the majority of Greek-Cypriot citizens. In 1979 a master-plan (Nicosia Master Plan) was initiated at a meeting between

the Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot communities of Nicosia under the auspices of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The Nicosia Master Plan (NMP) aimed at the revitalization of the walled city and to help plan the city in a way which would lessen the urban sprawl. Although the NMP is still running, the south side of the walled city of Nicosia has been sporadically developed by private investors resulting in gentrification. The centre of the unoccupied walled city has become a Mecca of coffee shops, restaurants and bars, which has created conflicts between the stakeholders and the users in the area, with Phaneromeni Square forming one of the strongest examples in the area.

Phenerομeni Square is situated within the medieval walls of Nicosia, linking Ledras Street and Onasagorou Street. The square has been named after Phaneromeni Church, which was built in 1872 on the ruins of an ancient Greek Orthodox nunnery. Panayia Phaneromeni is the largest Greek Orthodox Church within the city walls and it owns shops, offices and other buildings in the area, with the most important being the extensive square block of shops and offices within Ledras, Liperti, Phaneromeni and Nicocleous street (Figure 2), (K. Keshishian, 1978).

The area of Phaneromeni, with the Square as a focal point, has been through dramatic changes over the years, especially from the 1950's[1] onwards, both in terms of infrastructure and identity, and has been consistently connected to socio-political developments. In the contemporary history of Cyprus, the area of Phaneromeni is strongly linked to important political moments of the history

[1] In 15 January 1950, a referendum took place where 95,7% of Cypriots (Greek-Cypriots, Turkish-Cypriots and a minority of Armenians) voted for the unification of Cyprus with Greece. The referendum was not taken in consideration by the British colony. (A. Pantelidou et al., 2002). In 1955 the National Organization of Cypriot Fighters (EOKA), a Greek-Cypriot anti-colonial movement was formed and in April 1955 a guerrilla war against the British colony commenced, which lasted until 1959. The British recruited Turkish-Cypriot police officers in order to contain the EOKA attacks. In 1956 the first serious conflict between the two communities took place when a Turkish-Cypriot officer was killed by EOKA. As a result the Turkish-Cypriot community formed VOLKAN, a paramilitary group, which was later reformed as the Turkish Resistance Organization (TMT) (J. Calame et al., 2009).

Figure 2. Pictures of young people using the public space of Phaneromeni Square. Source: pictures taken by author, March 2013

and socio-political conflicts that took place in the Square. In 1996 a coffee shop by the name Kala Kathoumena opened next to the Square. After the opening of the coffee shop an urban sub-culture begun to develop in the area. Young people who frequented the coffee shop also spent time in the Square, mainly under and around a tree, which they named 'Manolis' after a Greek children's song, because of the circular bench that was at the time bolted around the tree. This signified the beginning of an ever-growing sub-culture[2] that used the Square as a functioning public space for leisure, exchange and expression of social and political views (figure 2).

When this site was initially chosen it was at the centre of attention with regards to its future as a public space. Following the regeneration of Phaneromeni Square in 2004, by Nicosia Master Plan, the extensive use of the space by the anarchist,

[2] Young people with anarchist, activist, antiauthoritarian and antifascist views.

anti-authoritarian and antifascist groups begun to frustrate the administration of Phaneromeni Church, the elderly, mostly churchgoers and shop owners, who begun to feel unsafe. In 2010, Ionas Nikolaou (at the time MP and currently the Minister of Justice of the Republic of Cyprus) described the Square as the 'Exarchia' of Nicosia. The comparison to the troubled neighborhood in Athens, Greece (where many socialist, anarchist and antifascist groups are accommodated and which is perpetually policed) resulted in negative connotations to the area of Phaneromeni and cultivated fear amongst the locals. During that time the area was regularly policed. The negative connotation for crime in the area has driven the local authority to gentrify it at an extremely fast pace, in an effort to dispel any type of what is considered antisocial behaviour, as it is thought that crowded places tend to come across as safer places (Van Melik et al., 2007, pp.25-42). An action that urban sociologist Sharon Zukin calls 'pacification by cappuccino', or 'domestication by cappuccino', in order to describe public spaces, which have been recaptured by the middle class at the expense of other users (S. Zukin, 1995). Following the course of gentrification: renovated housing, new spaces of consumption and middle class residents (F. Tonkiss, 2005), over the past eight years, new coffee shops, restaurants and bars have opened in Phaneromeni Square and the two neighbouring main streets, Onasagorou Street and Ledra Street (figure 3).

The rapid changes that took place in Phaneromeni Square created a series of conflicts between the different actors of the Square (Politis, 2011). Both the local authority and the church administration were accusing the groups of activists, anarchists and anti-authoritarians for vandalisms in the area and for not respecting the Church. The activists, anarchists and anti-authoritarians criticised the local authority and the Church for handing over the public space to the coffee shop owners and at the same time felt that they had been secluded and chased away from a public space (https://cyprus-mail.com/2014/03/15/war-breaks-out-over-phaneromeni-square/). The young people from these groups believed that the sudden development of the Square was a result of the local

Figure 3. Pictures of Phaneromeni Square following the opening of cafes and bars. Source: pictures taken by author, 2013

authority's effort to move the group away from the Square. In April 2014, the local authority went on to remove the public benches from the Square (some of which were returned following an outrage on social media and the local press, https://cyprus-mail.com/2014/04/06/the-battle-of-the-benches/), the Church begun closing its gates[3] at night and in 2017 it raised its railings, in order to prevent young people from climbing into the Church yard at night.

The anarchist, anti-authoritarian and antifascist groups have now moved away from the Square. Currently, there are only a few young people hanging-out in the Church yard, and the public attention has moved to two other public spaces within the city, Eleftheria Square and the old Municipal Market. Nevertheless, it is still pertinent to question the publicness of Phaneromeni Square and interrogate the role of the performance designer and how active co-existence

[3] The Church yard is traditionally a public space in Cyprus.

between the different actors can be enabled and maintained through the changes that take place in the Square. I briefly define the term 'active co-existence' as the accumulation and constructive interaction of citizens in public spaces. Cities allow (chance and/or intentional) interaction and connection between people; Tonkiss (2013, p.54) sees them as "(…) excellent communication networks, with a great capacity to relay and to amplify what they circulate, whether this be information, germs, viruses or riots". Therefore, the city and more specifically public spaces can act as tools for interaction and for 'active co-existence' of the civil society.

Returning to Phaneromeni Square, and the fear of the privatization of the public space, due to the café creep and the incidents of public furniture removal by the local authorities, this paper argues that there is a close connection between temporary place-making and 'active co-existence', and how when the first is successfully achieved can accommodate the latter. The following section will discuss how performance design methods can be used in order to achieve active co-existence.

2. The role of the Performance Designer

Dorita Hannah and Olav Harsløf define *performance design* as:

> *(...) a loose and inclusive term that asserts the role of artists / designers in the conception and realisation of events, as well as their awareness of how design elements not only actively extend the performing body, but also perform without and in spite of the human body. (...) In harnessing the dynamic forces inherent to environments and objects, and insisting on a co-creative audience as participatory players, it provides a critical tool to reflect, confront and realign world views.* (2008, p.13)

It is on the interdisciplinary character of performance design that I chose to stand, in relating to what Helguera (2012) notes:

> *(...) artists who wish to work with communities, for whatever reason, can greatly benefit from the knowledge accumulated by various disciplines—such as sociology, education, linguistics, and ethnography—to make informed decisions about how to engage and construct meaningful exchanges and experiences.*

Through its interdisciplinary character performance design can enhance the perception of place and shift socio-spatial conditions through a unique dramaturgical approach of creating temporal-spatial design. With the use of temporary scenographic interventions, I maintain that the performance designer can become a trigger for active co-existence and shift socio-spatial conditions within the urban realm.

In this section I will discuss two scenographic interventions designed and executed for the purposes of my practice-based research, in Phaneromeni Square. Following an extensive site analysis of Phaneromeni Square, through desk research (history of site, newspaper articles), photo-documentation and a series of semi-structured interviews, a series of interventions were planned and executed, through an iterative process. Beer et al. (2018) suggest that embodying or enacting eventfulness through interventional means is seen as a vital component of participatory engagement. The intervention entitled *sit. move.play*, was designed to question and challenge the publicness of the square, but it also aimed at enabling active co-existence between the different actors that used the square. This intervention, was comprised by ten traditional coffee-shop chairs placed in the middle of the Square. Each chair was given a neon yellow speech bubble, which said: "Welcome to Phaneromeni. You can move me around, follow the sun or the shade. But you can't take me home with you. Oh! And don't forget to make a mark of my new position with the chalk that you can find in the envelope hanging on my back". The chalk drawing created a physical diagram on the Square, of the chairs' flow in the square, and demonstrated the possibilities of use of space. The chairs became a tool for conversation between

Figure 4. Pictures taken during *sit.move.play*. Source: pictures taken by author

the Square visitors and the users, as people would ask each other about the intervention and the ones who were sitting there for some time would explain to newcomers (Figure 4).

The next intervention took the form of a round table discussion, by appropriating a public bench that had just been re-installed in the Square by the local authority. The participants of the round table discussion were both members of the group of activists, anarchists and anti-authoritarians and café users (Figure 5).

The aim of intervention No. 3 was to discuss the following:

1. How can the identity of Phaneromeni survive without having the sub-culture that has been there for over a decade to move because they don't have any square left to hangout, or the residents having to relocate due to the fact that they cannot handle the overflow of visitors?

2. How can the revitalization of the Square be sustained over the years, and not be overthrown by any economical or political changes that will take place in the

Figure 5. Picture taken during *Round-table*. Source: pictures taken by author

island?

3. Can the designer act as a 'trigger' for social engagement and 'active co-existence'?

At the round-table discussion there were 5 participants: three coffee-shop users (photographer, age 29, architect, age 29, lawyer age 30), and two members of the anarchist, antiauthoritarian and antifascist groups (member of Utopia Collectiva, age 31, Teacher and member of Utopia Collectiva, age 31). When all the participants arrived and were seated, introductions took place, were each one stated their name, age, profession and relation to Phaneromeni Square. Following introductions, I presented briefly the two first interventions and their outcomes, the aim of the third intervention and the discussion topics. The discussion was audio recorded. The participants were engaged throughout and some insightful topics derived from the discussion, which allowed the thought process of this investigation to progress. The main topics and worries that were brought up

by the participants were that following the development of the Square and the opening of the cafés, the group of anarchists, anti-authoritarians and antifascists have been chased away, and once again marginalized. The group expressed their worries of social segregation due to these changes and also blamed the Church for these developments, as it is the biggest stakeholder in the area, who rents property to the coffee shop owners and also has increased the security by closing its gates during evening hours. Moreover, the group discussed about their fear of privatization of the public space due what has been listed above.

Epilogue

In this paper I discussed how the performance designer can work outside the theatrical orthodoxies and trigger a dialogue for the publicness of the urban realm. Through the scenographic interventions the performance designer is seeking to maintain the notion of agonism within a public space in order to avoid homogeny, and enable the actors of a public space to maintain their cultural identity, social roles, opinions and positions. Identifying performance design as and expanded field that can engage with current social issues, reaching beyond solely creative placemaking, performance design can contribute in a positive manner towards the improvement of social structures and interactions and plan for future societal challenges, and by effect contribute towards the socially engaged practices. Its process and implementation should be participatory and require in-depth engagement of the civil society in all its stages; from research through to design, production and evaluation. At the same time, it does not promise radical changes but works towards initiating local changes.

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DESIGNING SOCIAL SPACE THROUGH PERFORMANCE: AN EXPERIENCE OF SOCIAL PERFORMANCE IN A POST-INDUSTRIAL LANDSCAPE

JORGE PALINHOS

Introduction

Between 2016 and 2018 the international performance project "Reclaim the Future: Nomadic Carnival for change" took place in different parts of northern Europe. The project was a partnership between Teatermaskinen, from northern Sweden, Dirty Deal Teatro, from Latvia, Rural Nations, from Northern Scotland, Compagnie des Mers du Nord, from Northern France, and Visões Úteis, from Northern Portugal.

This artistic project aimed to explore the potential of the European periphery to demand substantial change from the centre of power. The artistic entities proposed to activate local communities, triggering their abilities to imagine their own futures, by providing to the communities artistic and conceptual tools, that allowed them to better express their aspirations and demands in a way to make them visible not only to the authorities of their own countries but to European authorities.

The project was funded by the Creative Europe program, which allowed the companies to develop a series of local and international initiatives in all the areas, in a continuous process of artistic exchange and contamination, which ended up with an international parade at the heart of the European Union, in

Brussels, at the stairs of the European Parliament.

There were two interesting aspects in the project, which are the reason of my ongoing research on it. First, it aimed to develop a social practice, an ethical relationship between artists and communities, where communities were not used as outsourcing of authenticity, to evoke a criticism that Claire Bishop (2012, p.219) directs towards social practice, but in an attempt to find a means where the artists would provide communities the necessary tools for them to express their own authenticity and identity. Second, the project aimed at uniting the local and the international, by simultaneously working with local communities, but also attempting to find a common ground between them that allowed them to be an international force in the face of power. This, the articulation of the local and the international, is something that the European institutions have been trying to achieve for some decades, with widely different results.

While the project wasn't entirely successful in achieving these two aims, the attempt is thought-provoking enough, both in an artistic and political perspective, and some of the outcomes resulted in relevant attempts at the idea of designing a shared social space of community. The example I will address here, a carnival that happened in Porto, called "Parada Desatada", developed a dramaturgy of space, time and community that revealed a series of artistic tools to the communities, and how the dramaturgy of the parade, based on Medieval and Renaissance models can still be useful in an artistic and social context.

Art and politics on the Northern fringe

"Reclaim the Future – Nomadic Carnivals for Change" was the project of a series of European theatre companies to develop a project to promote increased social inclusion and the application of arts as a force of social change. The leading company, Theatermaskinen, was also interested in exploring the idea of the Carnival as an ancient disruptive instance of the established social rules. The Carnival, for Theatermaskinen, could still be a poweful mode of expressing the wish for social change. The Carnival, has the theatre of the street, the display of

the grotesque, where laughter and excess replace official protocol, according to Bakhtin (Elliot, 1999, p.129) the symbolism of unity, freedom and inclusion of the other. At the time of the project, Theatermaskinen was exploring the technique of the bouffon, and had became fascinated by this figure of medieval theatre expressing the irrational, the grotesque, the unconscious experience of the world, but also the late medieval idea of the inverted world, where the fringes and the outcasts become the centre of society, allowed to question the established order, as it had been explored by Dario Fo, among others, and allowing the invisible, the nonconformed, to be presented and seen.

Therefore, the proposed carnival, in the form of a parade, attempted to use the classical artistic performative shape of the outcast, of the monster, to challenge the respectability of institutional, technocratic power, and bring the marginalized communities of northern Europe to present themselves in front of the seat of political power, in a display of their own nonconformed power. Through this, they hoped to activate the power of communities and allow them to reflect on their own identities, ambitions and possibilities.

This was the underlying concept of Reclaim the Future, with the Nomadic carnival becoming a symbol and hypothesis of this shared European carnival of the future, where all the different identities could find a equalitarian space of expression, joy of the carnival, hope of the future, and pride in their own specificities.

Theatermaskinen is a Swedish company based on the wooded areas of Riddarhyttan, an old mining region, which was joined by Visões Úteis, a Portuguese company based in Porto, a post-industrial town, Rural Nations, a Scottish multiarts platform, based in Stornoway, in the Outer Hebrides, Dirty Deal Teatro, an independent theatre company in Riga, Latvia, an old Soviet country undergoing a capitalistic and western transformation, and Compagnie des Mers du Nord, a French theatre company based in Dunkirk, an old area of heavy industry. The concept was that each company would work with their local communities to develop several projects that would later be joined.

The project took place between June 2017 and June 2018, dates selected to happen during the solstice, an astronomical and ancient symbol and time of mystical transformation, where ancient religions would enact parades dedicated to the pagan gods.

Each partner was responsible for the local program, which usually entailed performances, conferences, workshops and other initiatives connected with the community. The focus would be a local parade joining the local people and colletives of each region.

The first phase of the project happened in Riddarhyttan, in Sweden, followed by Parada Desatada, em Campanhã, Porto, directed by Visões Úteis, and then in Riga, Latvia, the Outer Hebrides, Scotland, Dunkirk, in France, and finally in Brussels the final parade took place, with elements of all the other local parades slowly crossing the city centre until the stairs of the European Parliament, as a sign of the arrival of the fringe to the centre of European power, the local forces to the seat of the international forces, of those who live under circumstances they feel helpless to change, to those who have the power to change circumstances.

For the aims of this paper, I will only focus on the local initiatives that happened in Porto, which I was able to follow closely.

This program entailed performances by Visões Úteis and Teatermaskinen, a project of social cartography, an experience of georeferencing in the old social housing area of São Vicente de Paulo, the documentary film *Reclaim the Future/ Exige o Futuro*, and the book *Ficou tudo ao deus-dará*, by Márcia Andrade, with memories of the old inhabitants of the razed Bairro de São Vicente de Paulo, as well as a workshop of Performance in Community.

The main event was Parada Desatada, the carnival built together with the community. This parade was the initiative and conception of Visões Úteis, under the leadership of Inês de Carvalho, but involving a series of local authorities, art galleries, amateur artistic groups, ecology activists, dance studies, gym studios, elderly homes, etc., in a wide effort of mobilization.

The aim was to recruit these associations as being representative of local

populations, some of whom already trying to use artistic practices as a means of cultural and social development, others anchored in training, work or dynamizing projects for populations.

After identifying, contacting and establishing partnerships with these entities, several workshops were led by Inês de Carvalho and her collaborators. The main concept of these workshops was "lines with which to sew a community", and the objective was to identify and map the social and imaginary threads that could unite all these local entities in order to use them as the foundation of the Parade. One of these workshops was that of Fotos do Futuro, in which each participant was photographed with a slate where was written what the person hoped the future would bring.

However, in the process, it was found that despite the geographical and urban proximity, most of these entities maintained little contact and articulation with each other, functioning rather as autonomous universes, centred on their own close community and on the activities they developed. Thus, an important work, and possibly a very relevant result of this initiative, was the establishment of bridges of contact between some of the communities mentioned above, to develop future partnerships.

Another of the project's first workshops focused on exploring possibilities for the parade, meanwhile entitled "Parada Desatada", to provide participants with both an idea of the carnival freedom that was sought, as well as opening the space to debate which invisible lines could unite the district. There was also a second workshop focused on conferring artistic skills to the different partners.

The central concept of the parade was the rejection of a hierarchical imposition in which the artists directed the non-artists, but providing each community with the possibility of developing their artistic autonomy, both by offering them artistic tools that they might not have, as well as the ability for them to decide what they intended to present within the global dramaturgy of the parade.

The third workshop, of internationalization, provided the various local entities with the possibilities to meet and interact with representatives of international

partners, in order to create links between different European peripheries and gaining a clearer awareness of the European dimension of the event, which was also one of the objectives of European support for this.

The fourth workshop was a buffons' workshop, guided by Ana Azevedo. The buffoon's technique had been chosen to be a common link of all parades, not only because of the buffoon's association with the carnival, but also because it represented the subversion of the Apollonian social order, and the freedom of human drives against social and political conventions.

The Parada Desatada Carnival

The parade took place on July 15, 2017. It started at 5 pm in the demolished Bairro de São Vicente de Paulo and took a little over 500 meters, crossing the entire Praça da Corujeira through the central garden and then turning to Rua de São Roque da Lameira, where traffic was stopped to allow the procession to enter the precinct of the former and downtrodden Industrial Slaughterhouse of Porto.

I mentioned earlier that one of the principles of the intervention was to allow collectives to choose what they would do during the parade, but there was a dramaturgy of the space of the parade itself.

In the demolished Bairro de São Vicente de Paulo, there were several QR codes scattered throughout the space, which allowed listening to memories of former inhabitants, but also possible futures for that space, imagined by the children of the Elementary School of Corujeira. There were sticks with white flags painted with symbols and messages from each group participating in the parade, as a sign of the presence of these groups, which would function as a spatial aggregation device to start the parade. This was a way of introducing a temporal three-dimensionality in the carnival, making it not only move through space, but also through the time layers inherent to the place. The parade started with the movement of the backhoe and the buffoons, and with a lyrical singer singing on top of the backhoe. The group of buffoons, led by Ana Azevedo,

then led the audience in a procession to Praça da Corujeira, accompanied by a percussion group, Batucada Radical. The group of buffoons thus functioned as an element of aesthetic continuity through the various stages along the way, just as they functioned as a link between the various international phases of Reclaim the Future. This was followed by an amateur theater play, composed of scenes from the play "Conversas à Janela", by the local group "Rugas de Expressão", evocative of several episodes from the past of the parish. This took place in the windows of the neighborhood itself, decorated with paper flowers.

Praça da Corujeira, the central meeting place for the parish of Campanhã and the old cattle fair, revealed the historic position of the area as an interface between the city of Porto and its surrounding countryside.

This was followed by a show of young urban dances, by the MK group, of the Associação Cultural e Recreativas Malmequeres da Nôeda, and then the performance Fado do Futuro, with the seamstress and fado singer Amélia, followed by the "Hino dos Ciganos", with a presentation of Gypsy music and dance by a part of the numerous local Roma community.

From here, several local music groups accompanied people who carried messages for the future, on the way to the Slaughterhouse.

The Industrial Slaughterhouse, as an evolution and complement of the cattle market, was a space that revealed the past of the parish as a place of industry, meanwhile extinguished, and is the place that the Porto City Council intends to transform into the developmental backbone of Campanhã, through a new architectural project, by Kengo Kuma, dedicated to art and new media. That is, a space for the future.

Here there was a ritual of opening the slaughterhouse gates by the company Era uma Vez Teatro, composed by performers with cerebral palsy. This performative ritual, inspired by the aesthetics of Mad Max films, forced the interruption of the road traffic to allow the gates to be opened and the parade to enter the courtyard of the slaughterhouse.

At the courtyard, messages for the future were tied to the pigeons of the Associação

Columbófila Invicta, before they were released and there was a toast to the future, with fortune cookies and glasses with the words "the future" containing a drink called Pirolito: a non-alcoholic soft drink very popular in Portugal in the middle of the 20th century, which was reimagined for the occasion.
In the courtyard, the atmosphere of a folk celebration had been created, with popular food and drink that invited the audience to remain, in what would be a real and replicant practice of social interaction.

The Dramaturgy of Past and Future

Objectively, Parada Desatada results from a combination of dramaturgical thinking that seeks to reflect the variety of a particular community in a time horizon, from the memory of its eldest inhabitants to the expectations of the youngest. Such concept was translated into a space-time path that sought not only to articulate these sensibilities but also to integrate the community's own contributions. In this way, both theatrical and musical performances depended on the self-representation awareness of the communities involved, as the texts that viewers could read or hear were the real testimonies of the locals interviewed. In this way, the intervention did not seek to impose an artistic aesthetic external to the community, but rather to endow it with tools and means for it to seek its own form of representation. Further, the dramaturgical structure of Parada presupposes the identity of a community as being defined by anchoring to a place, the parish of Campanhã, regardless of ethnicity or ethnic group, and by temporal persistence: what united people was a shared memory and a communal hope for the future, a future that is also anchored geographically in the territory of the parish.
Through its choice of integrating the contributions of the locals under a dramaturgical itinerary, Parada Desatada became an open-slot teleological performance, where Visões Úteis determined the overall direction of the parade, and the community collectives filled in the empty slots with their own self-representation. This open-slot dramaturgy was not imposed, but slowly built

considering the different spaces and collectives involved, as a sort of imaginary community (Hobsbawn and Ranger, 2012), but one framed in a model very similar to the Corpus Christi parades of the Middle Ages, where the different guilds and corporations would join in a festive parade to claim their rights and existence in front of the city authorities.

Remarkably, this community performance attempted to connect a shared, remembered past with the idea of a potential shared future through a sort of memory loci device, which Frances Yates described as being "established from places and images" (2014, pp.6-8), and Simon Critchley argues is defined by motion: "The brilliance of Hegel's insight was not to reduce memory to a kind of dull recitation of the past, but to create something permanently moving. (…) Memory needs to be imagination. Transfiguration. (…) We are constituted through the vast movement of history, of which we are the largely quiescent effects. Sundry epiphenomena. Symptoms of a millennia-long malaise whose cause escapes us. Memory theater cannot be reduced to my memory, but has to reach down into the deep immemorial strata that contain the latent collective energy of the past!" (2014, pp.80-81).

The positioning of QR Codes, the images, the recovering of the historical memory of places, the use of posters with sentences and wishes built a real memory loci in a real space. And by the use of the parade movement, the conscious re-enactment and addressing of the collective memory, the parade attempted, dramaturgically, to also build an image of the future. This became clear at the entrance of the slaughterhouse, with the juxtaposition of images of future (real or fictional), with the sounds and flavours of the past, creating a blending of urban memories, and giving credence to Critchley's argument:

"And implicitly that story becomes one about the future as well. The city is a spatial network of memory traces, but also a vast predictive machine" (2014, p.38).

Conclusions

Reclaim the Future was an utopian international artistic project that attempted to blend the local and the European, the fringes and the centre. It raised a series of interesting questions regarding the role of social practice, the international and regional dimensions of artists, and the possibility of enacting social change through art.

Parada Desatada was just one element of the overall project but it brings a series of relevant evidence in the intersection of urban space, time, community and dramaturgy. The performance tried to create a bridge between the artists' roles and the community roles, by giving the first the tasks of mediation, empowerment, production and dramaturgy, and allowing the second to find their own ways of self-representation and togetherness.

By reviving the old religious form of the Carnival, the Parada created the dramaturgical possibility of an equalitarian performance, where no one is just a spectator or a performer, but everyone is simultaneously spectator, performer and community. This also creates equality between the different professional and non-professional performers, independently of their skills, social status and recognition.

Creating a dramaturgy open to the input of communities, activated by the workshops and with an extended social practice of artistic connection with communities, the parade activated the self-consciousness of the community collectives as actors of the urban space.

Further, this dramaturgy drawn the use of urban space, personal and collective memories, scenographic elements and dramaturgical events that activated the shared urban memories of the district, both personal and communal. Through it, the parade became like a sort of memory loci, a collective memory loci, which was put in motion by the movement of the parade, in a sort of metaphorical journey through memory towards a possibility of the future.

Through its combination of memory images, motion and space, Parada Desatada is a clear example of both a non-hierarchical site-specific performance that both

evokes elements of the ancient history of performance and ritual, but also past artistic and intellectual practices that can be inspirations for future artistic and research opportunities.

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PERFORMANCE MATERIALS

SOUND DIMENSION IN THEATRE. HOW SOUND INFLUENCES SPACE: THE JOËL POMMERAT'S THEATRICAL CASE STUDY

RAFAËL MAGROU

Our contemporary society is reinforcing the hegemony of image. First cinema, then television, followed by computer, smartphone screens have educated the spectators eyes, but also ears, to a necessary immersive and dynamic environment. On theatre stages, the cinematographic scope is more and more employed to enhance the dramaturgy, bluring the limits between the 6th and the 7th art[1]. Stage directors such as French Cyril Teste and Julien Gosselin, Brazilian Christiane Jatahy, British Katie Mitchell, German Thomas Ostermeier or Belgian Ivo van Hove[2], are using cameras and wide screens on stage. One of the artistic reasons for such devices is either to zoom or to give alternative views and angles impossible to watch from the seats or to show offstage (off-screen!) events. The cameramen are directly on stage, following actors' movements and focusing on their faces and expressions in a cinematic style. Teste is calling it "performance

[1] It's generally considered dance, theatre and circus being 6th art and cinema the 7th, classification inspired by the italian *paragone*.

[2] Cyril Teste (Collectif MXM company): *Nobody, Festen*; Julien Gosselin (Si vous pouviez lécher mon cœur company): *2666, Joueurs/ Mao II / Les Noms;* Christiane Jatahy: *What if they went to Moscow, Notre Odyssée 1* & *2*; Katie Mitchell: *La maladie de la mort*; Thomas Ostermeier director Berlin Schaubühne am leninerplatz, shakespearian *Richard III* or Edouard Louis *Histoire de la violence*; Ivo van Hove artistic director Amsterdam Toneelgroep, staging Aynd Rand-King Vidor's *The Fountainhead* or Lucchino Visconti's *The Damned*.

filmique" when Jatahy is making "ciné-théâtre". Certain shows are literally using the set as a cinema studio, while the film is projected simultaneously. At what point this cinema dimension on stage become a means to reach the 'theatre experience'? In the same way, amplified sounds, microphones, recorded music diffused, and even headphones for spectators, are now oftently used for theatre.

I. Sound dimension on stage

Before the arrival of sound amplification on stage, theatrical voices were fully recognizable like actors such as Louis Jouvet or Maria Casares for the French stage and the voices of British Alec Guiness or Lawrence Oliver were fully participating to their dramaturgy. They were able to strengthen their voice and to make it intelligible, but theatrical, as they projected their voice to the audience. During the early mediatization of actors' voices on stage, from the 1930-1960s[3], microphones were used for dramatic effects rather than to suggest reconciliation between audience and actors. Later on, to amplify voices on stage, some microphones were hung above actors' heads, giving an uneven sound restitution and creating an artifical dimension on stage.

To have actors' voices supported by speakers is now accepted. In the most recent decades, sound technology has significantly progressed, with the spreading of headset microphone use, to support actors' voices but also to avoid having theatrical voices. This participates to balancing the experience of spectators listening from the first to the last row, as the actors can be up or downstage, facing the audience or turning their back. These devices can bring similar effects as the cinema sound spatialization, we will develop. Theatre is not always two separated halls but devices are trying to make only one: in *Roman Tragedies*[4] (2008), Ivo van Hove invited spectators on the stage set as on a TV studio, when Thomas Ostermeier had spectators wear headphones to create the effect of being

[3] Jeanne Bovet (2019), *Premières médiatisations de la voix, de la Comédie des Champs-Élysées au Théâtre de l'Athénée*, revue Sciences/Lettres [en ligne] 6/2019.

[4] Play created with parts of the Shakespeare tragedies *Coriolanus*, *Julius Cesar* and *Antony and Cleopatra*.

on stage with the actors of *Abgrund* (2019), as left and right ears coresponded to stage left and right. But, as the spectators are changing their place or wearing prosthesis, doesn't it change his appreciation of the play? This clearly isolates each one from the other, transforming theatre in an individual experience. How far sound devices could be used for the live, original and shared theatre experience?

II. Joël Pommerat "théâtres en présence"

In contemporary French theatre, Joël Pommerat (1963) is leading a specific approach, as he's both writing and directing all of his shows[5]. His plays are written as the result of collaborative work with actors. Since the founding of his theatre company Compagnie Louis Brouillard in 1990, various methodologies have been applied. He's writing "from" the plateau, as the text is not given to actors at the beginning, but constructed through a long process with theatrical improvisations guided by Pommerat, on research topics or texts pieces he gives to his actors. This rough material is live transformed to reach the final text[6]. This so called "prospective dramaturgy"[7] is specific to his work and as Pommerat explains: 'I need them (the actors) to approriate the text, to be in the speaking, and not reciting or giving a restitution of a text. (…) I am trying to break the play machine, theatrical attitude, artificiality'[8].

Through dramaturgic writings and playings, each play is the opportunity to reach an intimate relationship between spectators and actors. To support this approach, stage set is to the bare minimum, empty boxes with some removable furniture. Main spaces are created by the contrasts between light beams and

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[5] Among more than thirty texts, the only exception are the fairy tales, inspired by known authors, such as Le petit Chaperon rouge / little red Riding Hood, Cendrillon / Cinderella or Pinocchio and one text: *Une Année Sans Été* (Catherine Anne).

[6] All of his texts are published by Actes Sud–Papiers, Arles.

[7] "Dramaturgie prospective", in Marion Boudier (2019), Avec Joël Pommerat, Tome II, L'écriture de *Ça Ira (1) Fin de Louis*, Actes Sud-Papiers.

[8] Joël Pommerat (2007), *Théâtres en Présence*, Actes-Sud-Papiers, pp.9-10.
'J'ai besoin qu'ils (les comédiens) s'approprient le texte, qu'ils soient dans la parole, et pas dans la récitation ou la restitution d'un texte. (…) J'essaie de casser la machine à jouer, à produire du jeu théâtral, de l'artificiel'. Our translation.

darkness created by stage and light designer Éric Soyer. Pommerat's work is often suggestive. Actors can appear like spectra, either moving forms in the darkness or light irradiated-like bodies, as lightings often comes from the fly loft or from stage left and right (as in choreography), rarely from the front. Pommerat explains he's seeking for some reality not for the truth and to make it happen, the actors' presence (présence) is his first act.

> *In my shows, I am searching for the same relationship we can have with the characters in a novel. That's the reason why, I think, I am looking for the light balance between showing and hiding, desire to watch and preventing that, and that seeking this balance also finds itself in all other aspects of the writing of the text and directing*[9].

Pommerat generally says he's a 'show writer'. At the beginning of the compagny, he's been using for the set some panels mounted on wheels to make appear and disappear actors and props in a few seconds. It has been transformed in blackouts used as director's cuts to switch from one scene to the other, thanks to the theatre magic box. In this cinematographic process, there are neither cameras nor screens with projected images used to make changing points of view. If stage sets and lights contribute to create a physical atmosphere, the sound dimension is equally as important and we will see the different ways he's using it to suggest several dimensions. As theatrical act is based on relational phenomenon, Pommerat is following Peter Brook's lessons, founded on respect for presence-based communication[10] and to reach this presence Pommerat is aiming for, the actors voices are the main medium to lead the dramaturgy.

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[9] Ibid. p.32. 'Je cherche dans mes spectacles le même rapport que celui que nous entretenons avec les personnages d'un livre à la lecture. C'est pour cela, je crois, que je cherche dans mes spectacles cet équilibre de la lumière entre montrer et cacher, désir de voir et empêchement, et que cette recherche d'équilibre se retrouve également dans tous les autres domaines de l'écriture du texte et de la mise en scène'. Our translation.

[10] Joël Pommerat and his compagnie has been in residence at the Bouffes du Nord, Peter's Brook theatre in Paris, at the turn of 2010s.

II.A. Pommerat's voices spectrum

This is important to "invite" spectators on stage and the light amplification of actors' voices enables Pommerat to tighten the space and François Leymarie, Pommerat's sound designer since the early 1990s, had been trying to realize Pommerat's vision for some time. In the early years of the Compagnie Louis Brouillard, due to a low budget, they used microphones on the side of the stage. Discontent by the blurred sound rendering, as soon it was financially possible, they equipped the actors with high frequency microphones (HF)[11], then headset microphones.

> *From the beginning, considering HF micros, Joël's main aim is to bring the voice of the actor closer to the spectator, to enable the actors to have natural voices, as in everyday life, avoiding the traditional vocal projection – the HF (microphone) has solved this problem, of the theatrical need to project the voice*[12].

As for the French semiologist Roland Barthes: the actor's voice is an 'intimate signature', Pommerat can use his actors' spectrum of voices levels. Amplification enables sound, inaudible in reality, to be used – until whispering or even breathing. Since *Grâce à mes yeux* in 2002, the director equips the actors with HF. Considered by some as a technical assistance, in his work this enable him to reinforce the presence of characters, in different ways. First, playing with colouring characters' voices: strong or soft, twangy or warm, child's voice or

[11] Skin coloured microphones, held by actors or performers to amplify their voice wherever they are on the stage. One of the first test of this technical device has been proved in 1979 "Tour of Life" by Kate Bush, a dance and singing show. With the help of her sound engineer Martin Fisher: he rigged a wireless headset microphone, using a wire clothes hanger, giving the freedom to the singer to move and dance on stage while singing.

[12] "L'orientation principale de Joël, et ce depuis le début, par rapport aux HF, c'est le désir de rapprocher la voix du spectateur, de sorte qu'il puisse faire jouer ses comédiens d'une manière naturelle, comme dans le quotidien, sans être dans une projection vocale traditionnelle – le HF ayant résolu cette problématique de la nécessité théâtrale de projeter la voix". François Leymarie, interview with Christophe Triau (2013), in the *Cendrillon* dedicated dossier, June 2013, Arts au singulier, Théâtre, p.60. Our translation.

elderly person's voice, etc., sound devices are used to lightly amplify the voice and to make this intelligible to the whole room. 'For many years, the headsets have enabled the actors to speak with their own voice intensity, without projecting the voice. That gives an impression of proximity and reality' says Marion Boudier, who's been collaborating on *Ça ira (1) Fin de Louis*[13]. More than this, it enables Pommerat to attain a level of natural effect with voices and avoids theatrical projection to the audience, in order to reach the intimate experience he aims. Second, these devices lead to suggest several identities and characters. Pommerat can choose to distort voices to express several levels of behaviours: in *Le Petit Chaperon Rouge*, the mother's voice is completely distorted when she's playing a monster to frighten her daughter to forbid her to go out to visit her grandma. This reminds Lynch's process, with 'characters presenting an invisible part, a part of themselves being offered to the imagination of the spectator'[14]. At last, he can trouble image and sound, as in *Cendrillon*, the male narrator on stage is dubbed by a woman voice.

In addition, the microphone in hand is one of the specific accessories in Pommerat's theatrical direction. They are often used to elucidate the use of the amplified sound. In *Je tremble 1* & *2* (2010): actor Lionel Codino is playing a ringmaster who's talking directly to the public "Ladies and gentlemen, good evening", though he's the central character telling his own life and death on stage[15]. Then, a playback song is playing and he's dancing as he was acting the singer, revealing the micro is a fake. Later on, an actress used a microphone in a stand – blackout – one second later, this device is left alone and accentuated by droplight, and embodies a presence. We imagine this to be another Lynch quote, while Rebbekah del Rio is fainting while performing "Llorando" (Crying) in

[13] Marion Boudier (2015), *Avec Joël Pommerat. Un Monde Complexe*, Arles, Actes Sud-Papiers, coll. Apprendre, p.141.
[14] Marion Boudier, Guillermo Pisani (2008) "Joël Pommerat: Une Démarche Qui Fait Œuvre", (2008. 2, Jeu 127, pp.150-157) 'des personnages présentant une part d'invisible, une part d'eux-mêmes offertes à l'imagination du spectateur'. Our translation.
[15] Ibid. Stage directions are given in the book and mentioning the microphone.

the *Mulholland drive* Silencio Club (2001): the song is going on, disclosing the playback track. Playback moments are repeated in Pommerat's show to enhance a transition, such a device following Eisenstein "attraction" concept[16].
Lastly, in *Ça ira (1) Fin de Louis*[17], dedicated to the French Revolution, the microphone is like a 'weapon' as the show is based on political speeches. 'Using the microphone on the stand is a contemporary way of imposing on the world' says François Leymarie. It was a 'starting axiom, they (the actors) took possession of it. (…) Each voice then appropriates the microphone with different dexterity'[18].

II.B. Atmospheres: a large sound palette

Pommerat's sounds range is quite large, from illustrative with some audio dubbing to abstract atmospheres used during the play or for transitional effects. This combination between diegetic sounds – relative to the space and time of the story – and extra diegetic sounds – external as background music or special sound the characters can't hear – are either illustrative or suggestive. Sound features are giving clues to what is happening on stage, or backstage. In *Les Marchands*, engines noises are giving clues to what the main characters are mimicking on stage: an assembly line. In *Ça ira (1) Fin de Louis*, different frequency bombing noises are expressing the army rapprochement to the building where the newly established Assemblée Nationale is discussing the French constitution. Some diegetic sounds can be exaggerated in *Le petit Chaperon rouge* (2004) the French director is dubbing the actress walking with footsteps noises, accentuating with a reverb the sound effect recorded though the carpeted stage floor. Referring

[16] In his 1925-27 films, the famous Russian director used this "trick" as a metaphorical tool to reach the spectators through emotional pictures or pictures associations.
[17] Created in 2015 for Mons Capital of Culture.
[18] Alisonne Sinard (2016), *La Multitude des Voix: Représentation Sonore de la Foule au Théâtre* (Dossier J. Pommerat), entretien avec François Leymarie, Alternatives Théâtrales 130, octobre 2016.

to Raymond Murray Schafer *Soundscape*[19], this sound-based storytelling looks like a 'show soundscape', as a combination of sounds that forms or arises from an immersive environment[20] as movies can be lead by original soundtracks. Pommerat's range of sounds is well balanced, and combines with voices to support them[21]. These levels of sound contribute to the close relationship Pommerat wants to install between audience and stage, with the aim to immerse the spectators in a specific space-time dimension.

At last, Pommerat never wants the set to be silent, explains us Leymarie. Show soundscapes contribute to the transitions as his dramaturgy is based on very quick scene changes, akin to a live movie montage. This obliges to cover the actors come and go to the plateau while blackout is done[22]. To reach this level of sound, combining soundscape and voice amplification, with the aim to enable image / body of characters and sound / voices to match, the use and implementation of speakers is very important. Leymarie's son, Anthonin, is also composing specific music pieces for Pommerat shows.

II.C. A strategic speaker implementation

The Pommerat's case is quite experimental as he has developed shows in several stage settings. A result of a long-term experimentation, Pommerat has reached this space organization with the help of theatre technical teams and partners of the compagnie Louis Brouillard, Leymarie reached a specific sound

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[19] Raymond Murray Schafer (1977) *The Tuning of the World, a Pioneering Exploration into the Past History and Present State of the Most Neglected Aspect of Our Environment The Soundscape*, Random House / french translation by Sylvette Gleize, Wildproject 2010.

[20] This is combined by the sound designer François Leymarie, with his nephew Grégoire Leymarie, who's work consists in mixing, distorsing, and also balancing voices and added sounds and musics, while Antonin, François' son is composing since 2006 (*Cet Enfant*) harmonies that will give a sound identity to the show – mostly extra diegetic sounds.

[21] At early years, before HF, audience was complaining that in Pommerat's plays, it was ifficult to hear the actors' voices, as the director asked his characters not to project voice. The HF has been compensating this loss of text information.

[22] The Pommerat blacks in the theatre hall are complete. Stage designer Éric Soyer is even hiding the emergency lamps to reach a total blackout and to make changes without being seen by the spectators, like cinema director's cuts. There could be dozen of blackout per play depending on the writing.

implementation[23].

> *(...) it's very important to have a sound diffusion in the middle of the stage, that's a bit powerful and distinct for the intelligibility of the voice (…). Upstage speakers are used to create sonorous spaces which would not be visible on stage, which represents an exterior to that which we see on stage. (…) Finally, other speakers are dispersed in the room, around the public space, to wrap the audience and to create some unrealistic, fictional exaggerated sounds as close as possible to the spectator's ear.*

The implementation diagram of speakers for *Cendrillon* shows central clusters for voices relayed by left and right upstage and downstage speakers combined with halls speakers in the middle at each side. This general disposal works in historical theatres or contemporary ones. This is more complex when it's developed for the arena in the circle *Cercles / Fictions* – Bouffes du Nord 2010, and *Ma Chambre froide*, Odéon-Berthier 2011. Different levels of speakers hang over the stage disc and a larger circle is installed over the spectators heads. In a traverse space organization as in *La réunification des deux Corées* (Odéon-Berthier, 2013), due to the long corridor and the distance from spectators to actors, small speakers have been integrated in the low partition walls that separates audience from the stage rectangle, balanced with speakers rigged above the heads of the rear rows, organized in three areas: left, center and right, used depending on the actors positioning. Depending on the room – as shows are turning in France and abroad –, the implementation is always studied to immerse the audience in the

[23] François Leymarie interview with Christophe Triau (2013), p.57. "Il est très important d'avoir une diffusion au centre du plateau un peu puissante et distincte, pour l'intellibilité de la voix. (…) Des enceintes au lointain sont utilisées pour diffuser des notions d'espaces sonores qui ne seraient pas visibles sur la scène, qui représenteraient un extérieur par rapport à ce que l'on voit sur le plateau; (…) Enfin, d'autres enceintes sont disposées un peu partout dans la salle, dans l'espace du public, pour envelopper ce dernier à certains moments, pour soutenir des événements sonores qui seraient plus irréalistes, fictionneles et qui demanderaient à ce qu'ils soient exagérés, rendus plus proches de l'oreille du spectateur dans la salle". Our translation.

space and time aimed.

At last, for *Ça ira (1) Fin de Louis*, the spectators represented members of the assembly while actors were playing on stage AND in the auditorium. Pommerat has been using live voices in the hall to embrace the audience in his dramaturgic action[24], and to recreate the assembly hall where debates were taking place. Speeches were given to persuade of the ideologies held by each political side, being "Tiers état" (main population), nobility or clergy. Some reactions have to come from the hall and supported not only by actors. After several essays, holophony-like[25] tests installed among the seats, sounding like ventriloquism, ultimately, the solution has been to incorporate into the public some extras. 'We quickly understood that the problematic of this show was more sonorous than musical' Leymarie explains[26]. Called "Forces vives", these are fifteen people, separated in two political groups (left and right wings), applauding their leaders or booing their opponents. Spread into the rows of the hall, they unfold a large spectrum of reaction, depending on the ideas expressed[27].

III. When sound creates image and space

As in cinematographic technologies, sound perspective is used to zoom in on space, situation, or character, to render dull or reverberating spaces. "In the first sense, the term 'perspective' is applied to visual perception and graphic techniques. However, our hearing system allows us to perceive plans, to assess the relative distances of different sound sources. And, since the advent of stereophony, the techniques of sound capture and reproduction aim tot the

[24] I can attest about this as I have been playing an extra Force vive while a week in may 2019 while the repise of *Ça Ira (1) Fin de Louis*, at the Théâtre de la Porte Saint-Martin.

[25] Holophony is a principle of spatial distribution, it is to the sound what hologram is to the image. This has been tested in collaboration with IRCAM (Institut de recherche et coordination acoustique/musique) in Paris, where François Leymarie organized some voices rehearsals with 130 professional and amateur actors. Some recorded parts have been used to represent the rebellious nation and to give the idea of a mass of people hurrying against the palace gates.

[26] Alisonne Sinard (2016).

[27] It even happen some spectator are reacting at the same time or at other moments of the show, though it's not a participative play.

realization of an 'image sound'"[28] explains Jean Chauteret in *La perspective sonore*. "The sound creates the image, plays the role of the camera and influences the gaze"[29] offstage can be depicted. Pommerat sound dimension research aims to create a special atmosphere, to suggest spaces and to realize an intimate relationship with the public. From this complex of levels with soundscape, voices, etc, Pommerat is able to build or unbuild space, to open or close the walls. He generates images with sounds, most of all spaces and atmospheres, without any cameras nor screen to establish a special relationship between actors and spectators. If necessary, he creates his own architecture, as happened in the arena in the circle or in the traverse theatre. So he can virtualy "invite" the audience on stage while keeping spectators on their seats, aiming to treat equally each row of the room. The power of sound is here to create an intimate proximity or an estrangement, possibly a distancing, still as both an individual and a collective experience. Thanks to technology and speakers implementation studies, Pommerat's sound 'score' is composed or assembled to create the intended atmosphere and complete the stage set, the writing reduced to the bare minimum to be evocative. Contrary to his contemporaries using projected image to underline their dramaturgy, Pommerat creates three-dimensional theatrical spaces by means of sound, combined with lights, costume and poem. Thus, he opens a free space to the spectator to build his own understanding as an invitation to travel into space and also time.

Compared to other directors playing with stage / backstage using cameras, Pommerat composes stage limits blurred by Soyer's lights and darks. 'In art,

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[28] Jean Chateauret (2009), *La Perspective Sonore*, Communications, issue 85 "L'homme a-t-il encore une perspective?", p.139. "C'est à la perception visuelle et aux techniques graphiques que le terme de perspective, au sens premier, s'applique. Cependant notre système auditif nous permet de percevoir des plans, d'évaluer des distances relatives de différentes sources sonores. Et les techniques de captation et de reproduction du son visent, surtout depuis l'avènement de la stéréophonie, à la réalisation d'une image sonore". Our translation.

[29] Philippe Couture (2010), *Présences au Théâtre des Codes Sonores du Cinéma. À Propos de Jean Boillot, Joël Pommerat, Jérémie Niel et Marie Brassard*. Cahiers de Théâtre Jeu (134), p.96. "Le son crée l'image, joue le rôle de la caméra, influence le regard". Our translation.

I prefer infinite to finite' says Pommerat[30]. Then the fourth wall is used either to create a heterotopy disconnected to the room or it is broken to involve the audience in the action. Pommerat can easily open or close the box, as he desires.

[30] Joëlle Gayot & Joël Pommerat (2009), *Joël Pommerat, Troubles*, Actes Sud, p.70.

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INVISIBLE RELATIONSHIPS: LIGHT, ART AND POLITICS IN THE PUBLIC SPACE

TOMÁS RIBAS

> *The illuminated window as stage, the street as theatre and the passers-by as audience – this is the scene of big city night life.*
>
> Wolfgang Schivelbusch, *Disenchanted Night: The Industrialization of Light in the Nineteenth Century* (1988, p.148)

Introduction

In this paper I will try to propose that some lighting techniques used in theatre to create a visual hierarchy on stage may have a parallel in urban lighting as a technique of attracting the gaze to points of interest of the capitalist system at night. To accomplish this attempt, I will base myself in the research for my master thesis called *Invisible Relationships: Light, Art and Politics in the Public Space*, where I have studied the development of public lighting and proposed that it is greatly directed to surveillance and comercial interests. During this practice based research I developed a photographic work I would like to present here called *Follow Spot* where I used to walk at night with a torch, through the streets of Porto, directing light towards dark spaces, to document what is left forgotten by the city lighting. The idea of this work came from my own experience as a

theatre lighting designer where one of my "functions" is to concentrate spectators attention where it needs to be.

Since the 19th century, with the industrialization of light, we spent most of our time in artificially lit spaces, that is, spaces illuminated by manufactured light sources that, in addition to having limits in relation to natural light, are often chosen and controlled by wills unrelated to ours, such as in the case of public space, commercial spaces and offices.

Light, if not natural light that exists independently of us, but artificial light, created and maintained by us, not only follows technical principles, but also political principles that are not so evident. Henri Lefebvre, in *The Production of Space*, writes that the first mistake in interpreting spaces is to regard them as neutral receptacles within which objects and activities take place (1991). If we assume that these spaces are not neutral, the light that illuminates them cannot be either. As light is so important in the visual construction of spaces and, therefore, in our social and subjective experience of spaces, the questions that Lefebvre poses: who promotes this, who explores it and how is it done, becomes very pertinent in light analysis.

If we think of the night as a space/time that is almost fully perceived through artificial light and, at the same time, consider the multiple ways light can change our perception, we can get an idea of the extent to which light can have an influence upon us.

Surveillance and Trade

Jonathan Crary notes, in *Techniques of the Observer* (2017)[1], the disdain Foucault purposely imprints in *Discipline and Punish* (1977)[2] on the expression 'society of the spectacle', famously coined by Guy Debord (2003). Foucault writes that

[1] The author mentions here the Portuguese edition entitled "Técnicas do Observador" as shown in the references.

[2] The author mentions here the Brazilian edition entitled "Vigiar e Punir: O Nascimento da Prisão" as shown in the references.

Figure 1. Tomás Ribas, *Follow Spot*, 2019

our society is the society of vigilance, not that of spectacle. But, as Crary points out, the models of surveillance and spectacle, far from being contradictory, are perfectly complementary. If the body is object of institutional vigilance, which aims to impose discipline and, at the same time, produce knowledge about its behaviour, as Foucault points out, the eye has, as Crary argues, being itself subject of scientific interest as well as subject of control technics.

A similar relationship could be made between street lighting, which, as Schivelbusch noted, first appeared as a organised system in Paris during Luis XIV reign under the responsibility of the police (1988, p.86), aiming for bodies' surveillance, and comercial lighting, more focused in attracting the attention of the eyes. Without ever abandoning surveillance, the spectacle is always present, sometimes in support of consumption, as in shopping centres, casinos and over-lit entertainment places, sometimes to enhance the power of state institutions and large corporations.

In this sense, shop windows' private lighting and public lighting complement each other perfectly. Light provided by poles, which allows a view of the spatial context, creates a foundation to enable the lighting of stores, facades and monuments to attract the eye in a much more efficient way than during the day, and at the same time leaves all the space visible in order to impose visibility on its users. Schivelbusch observes this complementarity between the two forms of lighting in a very pertinent way:

> *Commercial light is to police light what bourgeois society is to the state. As the State, in its appropriately named 'night-watchman', function guarantees the security that bourgeois society needs to pursue its business interests, so public lighting creates the framework of security within which commercial lighting can unfold.* (1988, p.142)

Guy Debord says that the spectacle is precisely the domination of all social life, including its visuality, by consumption: *'The spectacle is the moment when commodity reaches total occupation of social life. All this is perfectly visible in relation to commodity, because nothing else is seen but the commodity: the visible world is its world'*[3] (2003, p.32). Commercial lighting works, in conjunction with other mechanisms to reinforce this dominance of merchandise at night.

Robert Williams (2008) draws attention to the fact that lighting can work together with advertising and with discourses on ways of living and being at night to direct people to certain places chosen by the government and large corporations. Street lighting, boulevards and highways help people on the way home, work and consumer places, commercial streets are brighter than residential ones, poor neighbourhoods receive a qualitatively worse light than rich neighbourhoods. Commercial centres are extremely brighter, attracting consumers and making rest time productive again as it becomes time to consume.

[3] Translated from the Brazilian edition by the author.

Figure 2. Tomás Ribas, *Follow Spot*, 2019

Focus and Composition

What I would like to note here is the similarity between the kind of balance (with the commercial light emphasis) I see in urban lighting and technics of focus and composition in stage lighting.

There are many reasons why a spectator's eyes are oriented to an action or place on stage and light is not the only force to drive it. As Richard H. Palmer notes in *The Lighting Art: The Aesthetics of Stage Lighting Design* (1994), the expectation of something to happen or the knowledge about the play can make the audience search for an actor on stage independently of the light but it is unequivocal that brighter places have an attractive force to the eye.

As Palmer observes there are different features that are responsible for drawing attention to a certain place like brightness, color, movement and area size. Something can trigger attention because it is brighter, or because it has a more saturated color or because it is in constant movement like neon signs or because

it has more than one of these features at he same time. Regardless of these attributes however, *'The more discordant a stimulus is in relation to its environment, the more it will draw attention'* (1994, p.141).

In theatre, this discordant stimulus can be achieved by illuminating the key area of the stage with a strong or less dimmed fixture then the rest of the stage, or with a contrasting color, or even with a softer one but before everything we usually are already in a darkened audience.

If, with a lit-up audience area, the theatre was a place of social interaction, without audience lighting its character changes completely. What happens on stage overlaps what happens in the audience and the spectators eyes are drawn to the scene. Wolfgang Schivelbusch notes that:

> *The spectator in the dark is alone with himself and the illuminated image, because social connections cease to exist in the dark. Darkness heightens individual perceptions, magnifying them many times. The darkened auditorium gives the illuminated image an intensity that it would not otherwise possess.* (Schivelbusch, 1988, p.221)

As the audience's darkness increases the power of perception, light onstage unbalances the balance of power in the visual field, favouring the conduction of vision.

Similarly, on an urban context, the night itself creates the same kind of opportunity and the light of the spectacle, not a neutral light, but a very ideological one, creates a visual hierarchy focusing light on certain places. Schivelbusch cites a 1926 advertising handbook that says that shop windows should not be evenly illuminated, but instead products should receive more focused lights in order to stand out (1988, p.148).

If we also think that according to James J. Gibson in *The Ecological Approach to Visual Perception* (1986) the eyes are part of a system, being as they are on a moving head and a moving body, we can think about how this body's movement,

Figure 3. Tomás Ribas, *Follow Spot*, 2019

whether from the eye, the head or the whole body is, despite being informed by context, guided by detail vision, which is narrower and needs greater light intensities. The contrast of light and shadow provided by night light is a true narrative designed to guide the eye to certain places.

I believe there is a close relationship between the accumulated knowledge of how our vision works and the way night light has established itself. As I understand urban lighting, there is a relationship between the supposedly public light provided by the state and private light, each one with its own concerns and characteristics, but with common interests. As Schivelbusch (1988) notes, the light of the police and the light of commerce complement each other.

The ultimate goal of street lighting is the abolition of darkness to support police work at times when their work is impaired and perhaps more "necessary" as social self-regulation, which is stronger during the day, becomes more fragile at night. The light of commerce, however, makes good use of darkness as it uses

the shadows to gain attention more easily than during the day. If street lighting tries to diffuse light as evenly as possible into all spaces, consumer lighting makes an effort instead to create light points, such as in shop windows and advertising materials, to get the attention of passersby and sell their products. There is then a balance for street lighting, between a level of illumination that is higher enough to not allow groups of people unwanted by the commerce but not so high to disturb consumption. In any case, it seems clear to me that there is an equilibrium relationship between diffuse light and accent light, which evidently is not only exercised by commerce, but also by the State, as in the case of monuments and government buildings. If we make an analogy with the theatre, this balance is a dim light that illuminates the scene and the actors as a whole plus a strong but focused light where the most important action for the narrative is going on.

Follow Spot

During the research for my master thesis I did many nigh time excursions to observe the light in the city of Porto and surroundings. I started observing and taking photographs in order to document the lighting of the city and the changes I could see in different neighbourhoods. One thing that interested me was, as I developed before, the balance between street lighting and commercial lighting and the impact it does in our visual field at night.

As I observed, shop windows, public buildings, corporate logos, advertising, monuments, landmark sites, restaurants, usually have a difference in color or luminance in a concentrated place that puts them visually above its surroundings. It creates strong points of attention, like islands (or a lighthouse) in the ocean. On Avenida dos Aliados, we can clearly see the effort to highlight the town hall, just as on the shores of Vila Nova de Gaia, port wine brands remain present at night through illuminated signs. The Luis I bridge has a light that illuminates the floor for pedestrians who stop to see the view without dazzling their eyes and Porto's downtown has much of its space illuminated by amber lights. Some old

Figure 4. Tomás Ribas, *Follow Spot*, 2019

neon signs still exist, such as the Sá da Bandeira drugstore, next to new shops and restaurants with newer attention-grabbing techniques. The amount of white light illuminating the billboards of the Bolhão market does not let the night erase the rehabilitation that takes place there.

Elsewhere in the city the situation is quite different. The Avenida da República, in Vila Nova de Gaia has a diffuse and constant lighting with high poles that diffuses the light to the maximum "flattening" the avenue. The El Corte Inglés brand, lit on its roof, marks its presence all night but on the ground floor, while there are advertising inviting potential consumers with sales, a row of white light directed to the square discourages its use during the night. On side streets like Rua do General Torres, vacant land and abandoned old farms are forgotten, completely in the dark. Light creates an edition of what we see. It picks points of interest and transforms the visible, creating a new visual reality of the night space.

Interested in experimenting with this kind of equilibrium a I started a practice with the aim of unbalancing in some way the visual hierarchy created by night light. The practice was simply to walk at night carrying a flashlight with me so I could illuminate dark spaces when shooting, in an attempt to re-balance what is seen and what is unseen.

As it is possible to see in the images, part of the urban structure disappears at night: vacant terrain, wild plants, waste from buildings that are not considered heritage sites, squares that cannot be entered at night, political messages, graffiti, become dark, as well as all places one should not go. Some passages become invisible to those who do not know them by limiting movement to certain paths.

Later I named the photographs produced *Follow Spot*. Follow spot is a lighting equipment used in theatre and concerts to follow the main star of the show, such as the protagonist of a musical or the lead singer of a rock band. Unlike a conventional spotlight, which has a fixed focus, the follow spot is controlled by an operator to keep the "star" always illuminated and detached from whole. The spot thus keeps our focus where it should be, controlling the direction of our gaze.

Almost like a "rebel" follow spot, which breaks free from its script and turns to the backstage, I lit the darkest places in my surroundings with my flashlight and photographed it to make apparent what was invisible, rebalancing the visual field. My objective with this practice was not to propose how the light should be but to open a reflection about the priorities of urban lighting and its ideology.

Conclusion

In this paper I tried to propose similarities between theatre and street lighting, more precisely, on how both uses the concentration of light in certain places and the contrast with the surrounding ambient as a tool to attract attention.

If the theatre commonly use focus and composition to lead the eye due to a dramaturgical idea, urban lighting, in a more decentralised way, uses a similar mechanism to conduct city dwellers attention to certain places.

As we have seen, the State and large corporations try to impose themselves on this night space, manipulating our sight, sustaining historical narratives, attracting or distancing inhabitants and tourists from certain places (stigmatising or promoting these places), facilitating production and stimulating consumption. Urban light is thus largely subjected to surveillance, production and consumption, and with it the nocturnal landscape of its inhabitants.

With my creative practice I tried to expose, in some way, how this logic permeate urban lighting in the city of Porto exploring what is in the shadows. Carrying a flashlight created the possibility to wander through off-grid places, to choose what to illuminate and so what to see at night. To choose what to illuminate in an urban context where a lighting system is already working creates an awareness about the priorities of urban lighting.

Light emitted by artificial sources, and the transformation it causes in spaces, objects and people, cannot be analysed only aesthetically, but, on the contrary, needs to be analysed in the social consequences of its action. When the use of light is subjected to the logic production / consumption / surveillance, it implies that all possible influence that light can have on our social interactions is subject to this logic.

The objective here was not a proposition of how it should be but an attempt of a reflection. A reflection about lighting ideology and the potential it has in dragging attention.

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THE SCENOGRAPHIC SPACE(S) OF AUGMENTED REALITY

LUCY THORNETT

Introduction

There has been a recent wave of research attention focusing on immersive and mixed reality technologies across a range of artforms, including theatre and performance. Accompanying this is a pervading sense that the creative potential of these technologies has not yet been realised. Somewhat surprisingly, there has been very little work in this area within a specifically scenographic context. This paper will focus specifically on augmented reality (AR), drawing on frameworks within scenography to argue that this context provides a way to think through and experiment with the affective potential of these technologies. AR is not necessarily understood here as associated with a particular technology. Rather, I define it as any handheld or wearable technology that creates an augmented experience of space.

Contrary to most existing research in AR, I resist thinking in terms of a binary distinction between virtual objects or information, and 'reality'. I instead build on the work a small minority of scholars who argue that AR creates new mediated spaces or realities. I take this further, proposing that AR, like the related but distinct virtual reality, can be discussed in terms of its spatiality. I consider this spatiality in the context of a practice-research performance installation *Ernest*

Remains, staged at the University of Leeds in 2019. In this installation, audience members explored a multi-roomed space using a handheld tablet. I analyse the audience experience of this work through a discussion of audience responses provided during post-show interviews and reflection on insights that emerged during my own experiences of the installation. Drawing on existing theoretical frameworks within scenography, I contend that this scenographic experiment reveals the way in which embodied relations with AR produce affective, speculative space(s).

Augmented Reality

Immersive technologies, such as augmented reality, are not new, but recent developments in technology making them more accessible have sparked renewed interest in their potential by researchers and artists. In the case of augmented reality, the ubiquity of smartphone and their progressively more technologically sophisticated AR capabilities means that AR technologies are increasingly becoming embedded within the everyday (think, for example, of face filters on camera apps or GPS location data).

AR is often associated with particular technologies that use the cameras of handheld devices such as smartphones or Head Mounted Displays to overlay virtual information or objects onto the 'real' world. It should be noted, however, that terms associated with mixed reality technologies are undergoing rapid change, often driven by tech industry marketing. Academic research in this area tends to define it more broadly. According to Ronald Azuma, the three key characteristics of AR are that it 'combines real and virtual'; 'is interactive in real time'; and 'is registered in three dimensions' (1997). Most research in AR follows Azuma's lead in defining it according to its ability to blend virtual and physical, rather than in relation to a particular technology. Milgram and Kishino's 'Reality-Virtuality Continuum' is also influential in defining Augmented and Mixed Reality (1994). They place AR on a Mixed Reality scale that places the 'real environment' at one end and the 'virtual environment' on

the other. However, this continuum has been critiqued for its linearity and the binary it constructs between the real and the virtual (see, for example, Benford and Giannachi, 2011).

In an artistic context, researchers have tended to define AR quite broadly – a number have cited Janet Cardiff's audio walks as paradigmatic examples (e.g. Manovich, 2006; Wright, 2018). An early Cardiff work, *The Missing Voice* (1999) guided audiences through an area of London using sound recorded in the same location (relating to a fictional narrative), played back through headphones. Later examples such as *City of Forking Paths* (2014) have used sound combined with videos displayed on a smartphone. These works, understood as AR, demonstrate the breadth of possibilities for overlaying virtual space onto a physical location, unmoored from a specific technology. I propose that AR differs from other mixed reality technologies – such as, for example, projection – in that it augments space from the position of the body, through either head-worn or handheld technology[1].

Research in AR crosses a wide range of disciplines and applications, but has been less well explored within artistic contexts. Scholarly practice in AR art to date has broadly focused on surveying the field (Geroimenko, 2018) or outlining its political potential as a tool for activism (e.g. Skwarek, 2018; Thiel, 2018)[2]. However, of relevance here is a small but growing body of research discussing the embodied relations produced by AR art. Patrick Lichty discusses embodied encounters with both handheld and head-mounted AR artworks. He argues that AR produces 'a line of attention/flight between the interactor and the superimposed media overlaid on the given environment' (2018, p.137), which he calls a 'performative gestural gaze' (p.134). Lichty's work is emblematic of much research in AR in that it takes literally AR's ostensible premise of augmenting

[1] This differs somewhat from other broad definitions particularly within a theatre and performance context. For example, Benford and Giannachi (2011) use the term 'mixed reality' while Vincs et al (2018) use augmented reality – both include projection technologies within their definitions.

[2] These examples contain an interesting discussion on AR's ability to intervene into spaces of power due to its ability to hide things in plain sight.

'reality' with virtual objects or information. This, according to the dominant paradigm in AR, differentiates it from VR – as rather than being immersed in a virtual space, the user's primary experience is of the real physical space. This again underscores the way in which much scholarship in VR and AR sets up a problematic dichotomy between virtuality and reality. I contend that this binary fails to account for AR's ability to enact speculative worlds, in a manner similar, but distinct from VR.

A few researchers have discussed the way that AR might produce an alternate space or reality. Borko Furht argues that AR 'modifies the spatial configuration of reality' (2011, p.61) and produces a 'new environment' (p.48). Rewa Wright also contends that AR posits a 'parallel reality' that arises out of the relationality of body and artwork (2014), though for her this reality is distinct from, but connected to, physical space. Furht's and Wrights framings point to multiple 'realities' or orders of space, rather than a binary distinction between reality and virtuality. Following this, we can begin to open AR to a discussion of spatiality – expanding its attendant questions of embodiment to a discussion of bodily immersion across multiple registers of space. I propose that this offers a distinctly scenographic register with which to experiment with AR.

Existing research in scenography provides some frameworks to think through scenography's role in crafting embodied relations in and with space(s). Joslin McKinney and Scott Palmer define scenography as 'a mode of encounter founded on spatial and material relations between bodies, objects and environments' (2017, p.2). This notion of scenography as a relational practice is also echoed by other researchers (e.g. Aronson, 2017; Hann, 2019) McKinney and Palmer identify relationality as a key concept or understanding how scenography operates in and beyond performance. Taking AR technology as an interface between bodies and various virtual and physical registers of space, it can also be seen to function relationally. This highlights one way we can think about the scenographic and spatial potential of AR. However, in proposing that AR enacts speculative worlds, I contend that we can go further in discussing how a

scenographic framing might bring to light AR's spatiality, and in doing so, its affectivity.

Ernest Remains

Ernest Remains was a practice-led performance installation staged at the University of Leeds in 2019. It was designed as short experience of approximately twenty minutes, for one audience member at a time. Audiences were given a set of headphones and a handheld tablet and entered a multi-roomed installation that utilised the entire space of the theatre, including dressing room and auditorium. Footage of a figure moving around the space of the installation appeared on-screen periodically, guiding the audience through the environment. In between these interludes, the tablet could be held over objects in the space to trigger sound and video cues as well as virtual objects appearing on the screen. The content of the piece was autobiographical and related to my grandfather, Ernest Thornett, who was a detective fiction author and code-breaker for British intelligence during the second world war. The piece drew on 'drawing-room mystery' tropes and cast the audience member as detective, using the tablet to discover clues. The space was filled with archival material relating to Ernest, such as letters and photographs, as well as contemporary anachronistic material and objects such as print-outs of emails and online chats, digital screens, and floorplans of the installation space. Thematically the work explored the digital and material traces bodies leave behind, and touched on contemporary and historical notions of surveillance. In doing so these themes intentionally overlapped with the research aims of investigating the relations between bodies, matter, environments and technologies. Audiences also wore a go-pro camera that recorded what they saw, and this footage was used to prompt discussion during post-show interviews.

I will discuss this work through an analysis of my own experience, and comments made by audiences. Where quoting directly from interviews, I have used my own initials (LT) to indicate myself as interviewer, and the letters A-G to indicate different members of the audience. Two key aspects of the performance

Figure 1. *Ernest Remains* augmented reality installation at Banham Theatre, University of Leeds (2019) by author. An audience member viewing the installation through the screen

emerged where the AR produced a scenographic spatiality, and I will focus on these moments in my discussion here.

The first of these was the experience of 'following' the filmed performer through the space. For many audience members, this created the sensation that the performer inhabited virtual and physical space simultaneously:

> A: *I liked that sensation of following somebody. When I felt comfortable, when I knew where I was going.*
> LT: *What did you like about it?*
> A: *That it wasn't real, that he wasn't there. But he kind of was. That was the…almost felt more theatrical than the other bits and pieces. It felt like there was this real person who wasn't there.*

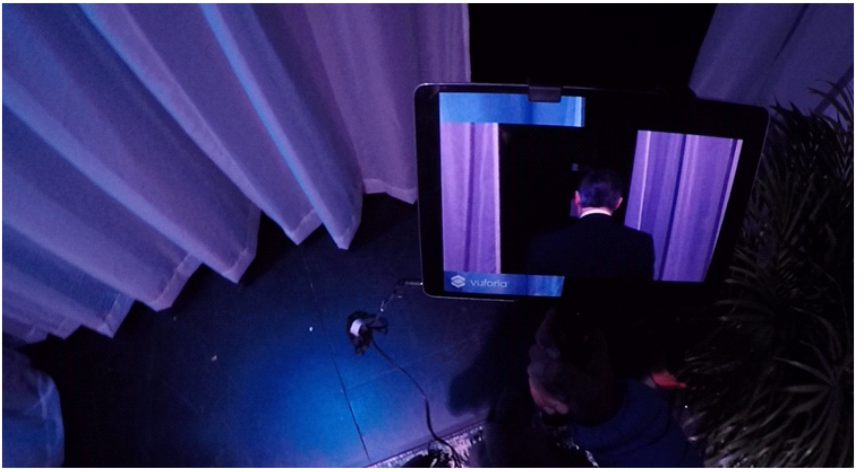

Figure 2. *Ernest Remains* augmented reality installation at Banham Theatre, University of Leeds (2019) by author. Audience following a filmed performer through the space

The use of the word 'theatrical' here is interesting in relation to this slippage between virtuality and actuality. Antonin Artaud described theatre as a 'virtual reality', discussing the way that it posits an 'illusory world' (1958, p.49). A number of scholars have pointed out that theatre is inherently concerned with virtuality (e.g. Popat, 2016; Thomas and Glowacki, 2018). For Brian Massumi, the virtual is not illusory, but ontologically real. He defines the virtual as the '"real but abstract" incorporeality of the body' (2002, p.21). For Massumi, the term virtual here is not synonymous with digital realities, however others including Mark Grimshaw have argued that digital technology might provide us with new ways of accessing this virtuality (2014). Massumi's work is useful here in understanding that the virtual is no less *real* than physical reality. Instead it consists of a different materiality, one that can still be *felt* in the body. In this sense, we can relate *virtual* reality to *theatrical* reality in that though it is speculative, it is simultaneously ontologically real, and perceived as such through

the sensing body of the audience. I will turn now to another moment in the performance to illustrate this further.

In the final part of the performance, audiences were guided to return to the space they had started in. While they were elsewhere in the space, the curtains had opened to reveal posters of trees on the auditorium floor. A fan had been turned on, creating a gentle breeze that moved the curtains. When audiences directed the tablet at the trees, life-sized virtual trees appeared that remained in place if the screen was moved up towards the leaves at the top. For some audiences, the trees registered as a solid presence in the space. For these participants there was an embodied instinct to avoid walking through the trees, despite knowing that they weren't physically there, as seen in the comments from two audience interviews below:

> B: *Yeah the trees were, that was a very cool feeling, sort of walking in and… knowing where I could move and where I could walk suddenly became a bit of like a 'Oh, wait'. I almost questioned whether I could walk over the tree… Yeah, it felt definitely felt like physical obstacles and I was sort of almost… moving around them rather than sort of confidently moving through them.*
>
> LT: *Oh, you moved your body to get around them?*
> C: *Yeah, I went like that to try and get round it. And I was like (imitates movement) …that's ridiculous.*
> LT: *That's quite interesting. So then there's a kind of bodily feeling that the tree is in the space?*
> C: *Yeah. Even though I knew it wasn't.*

The virtual trees here are visually seen on-screen, but *felt* to be co-present in the same physical space as the audience – they have a *virtual* materiality. The fact that this slippage of virtual into actual was described by the participant above as producing a 'cool feeling' points to the affective nature of this experience. For

Massumi, affect is temporal – a 'state of suspense' (1995, p.86) or pre-conscious intensity that allows the virtual to enter, briefly, into our conscious experience. In fact, he argues that it can *only* be understood temporally and not spatially (2011, p.16). However, an atmospheric and scenographic perspective might reveal this affective experience of the virtual to be spatial as well as temporal.

There is a growing body of scholarship on the spatiality of these affective processes. Derek P. McCormack uses the term 'affective spacetimes' to articulate the inseparability of spatiality and temporality in this process:

> *Space, in other words, is never a backdrop for something more dynamic. Nor indeed, can it or should it be juxtaposed to process or temporality in a way that privileges the latter. Instead, it is always more accurate to speak of space, or spaces, as multiple: spaces produced via a range of technologies and experienced through different sensory registers; spaces with variable reaches and intensities; and spaces that can often only be apprehended in and through the assemblages of movement and stillness of which they are composed.* (2014, p.2)

This discussion of spaces as multiple, as produced by bodies in movement and through technologies underscores the way that the AR technology in *Ernest Remains* enacted speculative *scenographic* space(s). Kathleen Stewart similarly speaks of atmospheric 'attunements' – 'an attention to the… complex emergent worlds…', which, following Heidegger, she calls 'worlding' (2011, p.445). Like McCormack, she discusses the embodied practices through which such worldings emerge (p.446). This helps to think through the way in *Ernest Remains*, the moving body in concert with handheld screen, digital content and headphones – produced a particular spacetime or atmosphere.

There are a number of ways that this spatiality was seen to manifest in the performance. One of these was a particular directionality necessitated by the

Figure 3. *Ernest Remains* augmented reality installation at Banham Theatre, University of Leeds (2019) by author. Virtual trees appearing on-screen

device, a forward motion produced by the need to follow the screen and keep focus directed towards it:

> D: *you do not know what will (happen) because I can only look forward… you're afraid some(thing) horrible will go behind…*
>
> E: *you're never watching your back because you're always watching the front.*

This opened up a space of potentiality behind and around the audience. This mediation of the embodied relationship to space can also be seen in the moment with the virtual trees. In other AR reactions to objects in the space, where they were visual, they were constrained in scale in relation to the object that triggered them. The trees produced a different kind of embodied encounter to the device and space, as audiences moved the screen and their bodies in order to look up:

> F: *It somehow changes the, you're no longer just looking at a space holding an iPad in one way. You're moving your body, just so you can see different things. Even just extending your back for a little bit, I think was really interesting because you spend the whole performance just walking around, holding it in one way and then going upwards changes the way you're using your body.*

For one audience member, this embodied movement, in concert with the sensation of the breeze created by the fan, transported them to another space entirely:

> G: *I think that was a wonderful moment and then with the trees it just, I don't know, you just definitely forgot you're in a theatre, especially those long verandas with those curtains and blowing takes you into a specific (place). It's definitely not winter, perhaps it's summer with a breeze.*

For others, rather than space becoming other, it became multiple or unstable:

> F: *And you're questioning the... I'm going to say reality. Because it was, it shifted. It was shifting. It was in two places at once.*

What these audience experiences have in common, I propose, is that the embodied relation to technology enacted speculative *scenographic* space(s). This occurred as - variously, for different audience members – a directional opening out of spatial possibility or potential; a sense of *elsewhere* overlaid onto *here*; and/or a feeling of inhabiting multiple simultaneous spaces or realities. In the section that follows, I will discuss this speculative spatiality in terms of its scenographic potential.

Scenographic Space(s)

As touched on above, scenography is often discussed as a spatial and relational practice. Rachel Hann highlights how scenography mediates these relations in 'a crafting of stage geographies as felt atmospheres through material and technological interventions' (2019, p.22). She extends Stewart's notion of atmospheric worlding to a concept of 'scenographic worlding', to articulate how 'stage geographies become manifest as perceptual worlds' (p.82). Drawing on both Stewart and McCormack's work, Hann emphasises the temporality of worlding, and the way in which 'worldly thresholds become manifest, albeit fleetingly, in relation to other worlds already transgressed and the worlds that lie ahead' (p.83). In this sense we can see the AR in *Ernest Remains* functioning as an embodied relation to technology that scenographically produces multiple simultaneous and overlapping worlds. Hann argues that this is different to scenography's ability to produce speculative (or human-conceived) worlds. For her, scenographic worldings are not ontologically speculative. However, following Massumi's conception of the virtual as both actual and abstract, I contend that the space(s) that emerge through this embodied relation are simultaneously real and speculative.

I use space(s) here in order to connote an experience of space that is both singular and multiple, echoing McCormack .This also draws on Dorita Hannah's discussion of scenography's spatial multiplicity. She argues that scenography 'establishes environments through which actions develop and multiply beyond any physical or virtual frame' (2017, p.44), and that digital technologies in performance and daily life particularly underscore this multiplicity. In *Ernest Remains* space was for some audiences directly perceived as multiple; for some as a field of potential that surrounded them as they focused on the device; and for others still as another space and time, experienced in the here and now. In this sense, the plural space(s) also points to multiple individualised audience experiences rather than a single idealised experience. These experiences of space were not necessarily or not always experienced separately, but as spaces that

overlapped and shifted in affective process.

Conclusion

Ernest Remains shows how AR does not simply overlay digital content onto physical space. Rather, it is capable of producing affective, speculative space(s). This occurs through the particular relations of body and technology that AR constructs. These embodied relations are specific to particular sites, bodies and devices, and should not be understood as constant across all AR experiences. A scenographic lens allows us to conceive of augmented reality as a relational, spatial practice. Following this, I contend that scenography is distinctly placed to reveal some of the key ways in which AR might be utilised affectively. Moreover, I argue that the relational virtuality that emerged through this AR experiment reveals the ways in which the affectivity of scenographic space might be inherently linked to virtuality. In other words, if scenography allows us a space for thinking through AR's affectivity, AR might in turn shed light on how affect operates in scenography.

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PERFORMANCE AND ARCHITECTURE PEDAGOGIES

SPATIAL THEATRE FOR ARCHITECTS: EXERCISES FOR STUDENTS

GRAY READ

I teach young architects how to think about the purposes of design – why design makes a difference in the world. We talk about values, priorities, and consequences. Students are challenged to shift their thinking away from seeing buildings as composed objects for contemplation and toward recognizing them as vital partners in the social world we inhabit. Buildings may not move, but they act, receiving and directing our movement, opening some possibilities and closing others. Here, I present a series of exercises along with their theoretical foundation, which invite students to explore the social roles of architecture.

If buildings can be considered more than simply backdrops to human action, then how do they 'act' in the world? Sociologist Bruno Latour argues that the things in the world that are not human, which he calls "non-humans", are the missing masses of sociology, ever-present but long unrecognized for the social roles they play (Latour, 2006). Latour debunks traditional reasoning that non-humans are just dumb stuff, mute 'objects', which can carry only the meaning put into them by people yet hold little power to act independently or intentionally on us. Latour and other 'New Materialist' theorists argue that these non-humans, including animals, plants, buildings, cities, machines, and electronic devices, in fact do act, all the time, in their own physical way in the social world we inhabit.

Latour considered the door closer, a simple mechanical device with one job – to close the door behind you (Latour, 1988). He recognized the non-human door closer as a social actor that takes some of the role that once was played by a human doorman – it closes the door gently behind you and reminds you that the door should be kept closed. A mechanical action is also a social action. Similarly, all architectural spaces have a role in the events of our lives. A stairway can be generous (a human quality) by offering a place to pause on the way up (a spatial quality), with a view perhaps (a gift), or a stairway can rudely insist that people climb single file, thus interrupting conversations, and leaving everyone breathless at the top.

To help young designers think about the actions of their design choices, the first step is to notice how we read built space for its social potential, often without thinking about it. I ask students in large classes to find places in our architecture school building to check out what's happening, for a conversation with a friend, and to think through an idea. Of course, students have already found these places in the course of inhabiting the building, but this time they map them explicitly, measure them and enact them. The Florida International University School of Architecture building is particularly well suited to these exercises because it was designed by Bernard Tschumi, who designs, often provocatively to create events. Students draw plans and sections with themselves as figures in them, and they measure the dimensions that make the spaces work. The next week, they are outside again to find places where the building frames views, placing people so they see each other in strategic or picturesque scenes, like living photos. Finally, students compose 10 seconds of choreography in partnership with an element of the building. They find an ordinary motion in which the building mediates between two people by creating a spatial/social relationship, then heighten the motion for a video camera. They draw the motion in plan, section and as a storyboard (Figure 1). These skills they then use to analyse selected buildings, focusing on how the design treats people spatially and socially.

If we credit buildings with social action, even when they do not move, then an

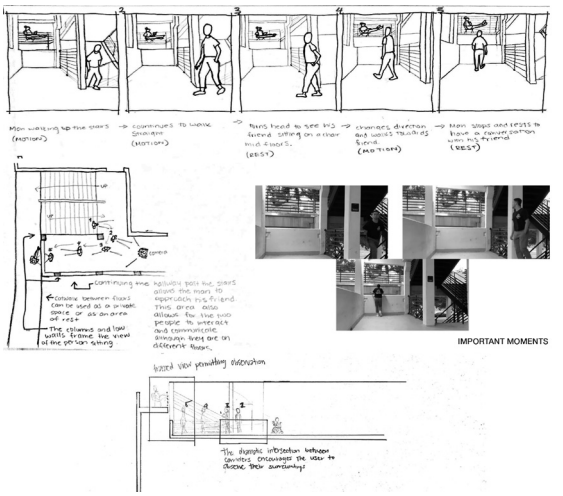

Figure 1. Fernando Arana, John Correa and Shailee Weiss, drawing of choreography sequence in the School of Architecture building, FIU, 2019. Drawing includes a storyboard, plan, section and photos of important moments

architect can be considered a kind of theatrical director, in charge of the non-humans in the scenes of daily life. Like a director, the work of the architect happens long before the action. They block the scene, worry over framing, pacing and scale. They imagine how a layout or detail will perform in a variety of scenarios, with drawn figures standing in for real people. Everyday experience informs decisions, but the skill lies in design that opens to unforeseen possibilities. At best built spaces follow the rules of improvisation, they say yes to the actions of their human partners by receiving them graciously, then move the scene forward by suggesting new potential.

In a small studio class, I asked students to design and build a non-human partner to act with at least two of them in a scene that they performed together. The culminating project/performance addressed one of the fundamental ways that architectural space mediates between people physically, defining social spaces. Two projects in particular demonstrate the ideas.

Figure 2. Aileen Garrido and Audrey Handel, photos of dance with façade box. Dancers moved while facing each other, opening and closing layers of the façade

Aileen Garrido and Audrey Handel danced a tango/love story with a box/mask that acted as a building façade, concealing and revealing the face by degrees through screens and behind doors (Figure 2). They played on the drama inherent in opening of a door, the tension of a screen that offers only partial view, and the physical gestures of removing layers of enclosure, like clothing.

A different group of stu explored architectural scale through a gridded façade (Figure 3). Each square of the grid was a drawer that could be pushed out to make a platform or step. The drama proceeded from reading and rereading of simple configurations in relation to movement and the body. The piece moved with them, receiving their actions graciously and proposing new ways to move the scene forward.

If objects act in a social world, with or without moving, do they act with intent? A number of scholars have parsed this question as part of a broad movement toward a new 'materialism', which proposes that ideas, emotions,

Figure 3. Performance by Mark Pataky, David Acosta, and Stephanie Colón. Boxes were pushed out or pulled in (by David Acosta behind the scene). Each configuration suggested a specific engagement with the body: climbing steps, stretching out, or having lunch

and metaphysics, which are usually reserved for people, can also be attributed to non-humans: animals, plants and things. Political philosopher Jane Bennett writes that this movement is, "a continuation of earlier attempts to depict a world populated not by active subjects and passive objects, but by lively and essentially interactive materials, by bodies human and nonhuman" (Bennett 2015, p.224). She and others reject the division of the world into human subjects, who act with purpose and agency in the world, and insentient objects who can only be acted upon. Instead, Bennett summons Latour to define all things, including people, as 'actants' with presence and power to interact with each other according to their physical being and proclivities. Bennett recognizes 'vitality' in all things, whether they are sentient or not. This presence or vitality is lodged in the physical qualities of creatures or things, which arise out of their origins and respond to their position in the world. For example, a raccoon seeks out food in the underbrush, acting with purpose and effectiveness in its

ecological niche. An oak tree seeks the sun, growing branches that place leaves where they will receive as much light as possible. Lacking a brain, it still acts effectively to feed its own growth and reproduction. Even a rock asserts its presence with solidity, resisting the eroding forces of rain, wind, and human machinery according to the qualities of its formation, whether hard if granite or soft if limestone. Designed objects carry the purposes of their creators as well as the material presence of their elements, which act independently. Designers well know that materials resist; they warp or check or bend according to their history and their nature. Do things act with intent? Yes, however their intentions are not the singular, explicit purpose of a sentient being, but the compound intentions of materiality and history.

These intents and interactions are deeply ecological. Nothing exists apart from its relationships with other things. Everything, including humans, asserts its position and continually adapts to its situation, acting with purpose in its own way, with the qualities it has.

To explore some of these non-human qualities and their relationships with people, I gave a week-long workshop with a study-abroad group in Genoa. We warmed up with exercises based on director Anne Bogart's Viewpoints, developing an awareness of each other and of the things around us (Bogart, 2004). Then I asked students to find a simple architectural element out in the city, such as a doorway, set of steps, a wall, or a bench and to engage it as a third partner in a short video, which included drawings that described the real dimensions and positions of things and people. The idea was to read the social potential of the element and to interpret it in as many ways as they could, to ask in their actions what else it could do with them, bringing their own set of intentions to the game. Then to draw it to understand the real, architectural dimensions in plan and section.

Elise Francis and Vera Kolalias found an old door on a Genoa street, which they wove into a story of desire (Figure 4). Kolalias' interaction with the door, focusing on her hands, conveys the power of open and closed in emotions of

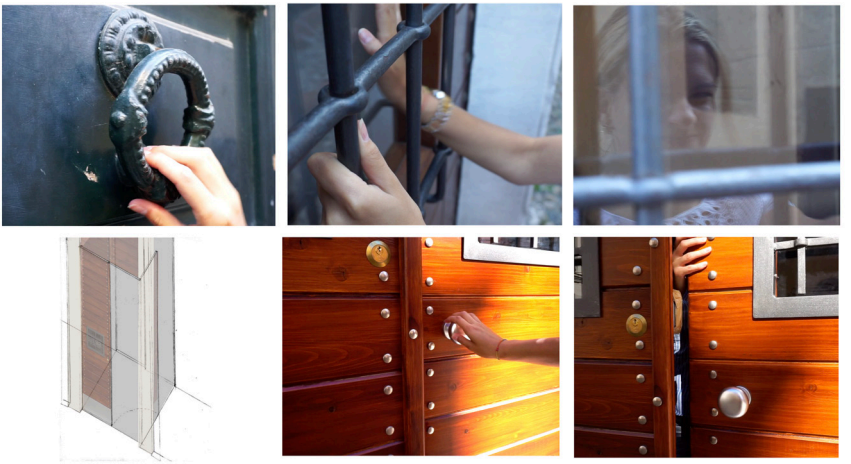

Figure 4. Elise Francis and Vera Kolalias, stills from video exploring the emotional potential of a door in Genoa

touch without words.

These projects were intended to develop an architectural sensibility based in interaction, rather than visual composition. Design, often considered an explicit projection of human desires onto compliant material, is recast as creating an interaction or event. The projects, in both video and drawing, show people doing what they might do in the spaces, while highlighting the materiality and presence of architectural elements. Design becomes a social proposal, like an improvisational move, asking for a response.

This shift in thinking requires a shift in drawing technique. Plans, sections and elevations are still necessary because they register the real dimensions of construction. The crux of the matter is to show how dimensions and materials play in the life of the place.

Two advanced graduate students: Maria Flores and Victoria Gomes explored alternative types of drawing that might be more suited to a design process based

in the interaction of people and place. Flores designed an entire community based on the premise that when Miami is flooded by sea level rise, its high-rise buildings will still be habitable, albeit accessible only by boat. She devised a "Colony" of inhabitants who built around, within and between existing high-rise buildings, inventing a self-sufficient and communal way of life. She wrote stories from the point of view of Colony inhabitants, which described their post-diluvian life and the decisions they had made to survive together, and she drew architectural views detailing how the city worked. She produced a graphic novel that combined narrative with scenes, people and places. The images focused on the descriptive and architectural more than on interpersonal drama, and the sweeping expanse of her vision became accessible through characters in action.

Imagining the future is the architect's profession. Flores' work draws on a tradition of almost mythological thinking in architectural education, that flourished particularly in the 1980s and 90s, drawing on literature to feed spatial imagination. That impulse leapt from the stories of the deep past toward imagining technological futures in drawings that hover between science fiction and comic book style. Some architecture students develop exquisite skill in drawing and computer graphics and go on to careers in set design for movies.

Victoria Gomes developed a means of drawing to describe the life of an existing place – a market street in Port of Spain, Trinidad (Figure 5). She interpreted a classical form of drawing, the *analytique*, as a means to show the interaction between people and place. An *analytique* merges plan, section, and detail into one composed drawing in order to describe an architectural space more fully than any single drawing can. A building façade is peeled away to reveal the section, which is folded down into plan and a detail projects forward at a larger scale. Gomes started with photographs taken at the market, projected the architectural lines of the buildings outward, then cut sections in order to see both inside and outside spaces simultaneously. Plans and maps sprung out of the photos at whatever depth was appropriate to their scale on the drawing. She populated the scene with photos and drawings of people she observed at the market and she

Figure 5. Victoria Gomes, Analytique of the social life of the Charlotte Street market in Port of Spain, Trinidad. Collage of photos and drawing, 2019

interviewed some of them to add narrative inserts. In this composite way, the drawing shows the overall location of the market in the city, the dimensions of the street, the stalls, and buildings, as well as some of the details of railings and vending tables, all embedded within a scene of the life of the place, showing people both inside and outside doing what they do at the market.

Theatre has long been embedded in architecture and architectural education, notably in the Bauhaus and Vkhutemas schools of design in the early 20th century. Aldo Rossi's *teatro scientifico* and John Hedjuk's architectural performances carried part of the tradition forward. Since the 1990s, architects such as Bernard Tschumi and Diller/Scofidio have embraced theatre and the idea that architecture is meaningless without the events that take place there[1]. They design buildings

[1] Tschumi has produced several books on his firm's work that explore the idea of event. See *Event-Cities* 1-4 (1994, 2001, 2005, 2010) all published by MIT Press.

to provide the potential for people to make their own decisions on how to live and move, indeed their buildings provoke or challenge people to make creative use of the spaces. Such buildings do not fit their function precisely, rather they act with people, open to the many reuses and reinterpretations that characterize the spontaneous life of the city (Tschumi, 1994; Diller + Scofidio, 2019). They see their work embedded in action, whether literally in performance pieces or over time as buildings in the city.

Increasingly the pressures of climate change, the imperative of social equity, and even the pandemic challenge architects to build for complexity and change. Creative vision is needed more than ever but framed as a proposal within an ongoing improvisation. It must say yes to its situation, open to the actions of others, and, through the physicality of building, propose a way forward, which in turn will be interpreted by people in the process of constructing their lives as they envision them.

In learning their craft, architecture students should play and playact as part of the process of putting themselves in the role of both the people they design for and the things that they design. Sometimes it's useful to think like a thing, to imagine non-human existence within a social world.

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SEARCHING FOR DISSIDENCE IN THE SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF COSTA RICA: PERFORMATIVE ARTS AND ARCHITECTURE'S BOUNDARIES

NATALIA SOLANO-MEZA

Introduction

This paper examines the pedagogical opportunities that arose after students executed a series of performative events at the School of Architecture or *Escuela de Arquitectura* (EA by its name in Spanish) at the University of Costa Rica (UCR). These performative events occurred in October of 2019. The "October events" allowed for a group of students to begin an ongoing exploration[1] of the potential of performance and of the value of intersecting spatial or architectural knowledge with performative practices. Students voices[2] claimed that the EA had turned its back to performative and more theoretical explorations, focusing mainly on building and technical aspects. Performance, specifically what I will refer to as "spatial performances" – performative events where architecture

[1] In the middle of the COVID-19 pandemics these efforts were suspended.

[2] For this work, conversations were held with students who were interested and participated in the actions taken including: Juan Leiva, Daniela Araya, Jeremy Salazar, Julio Matamoros, Esteban Barrantes, Zetty Alonso, Maximilano Morales. Some of this advanced students – Araya, and Barrantes – along with others not cited are working on a collective dissertation under the author's tutoring which tackles, precisely, the notion of experimenting as a means to address fixed or institutionalised ideas regarding spatial design in the Costa Rican current political, social and environmental context. Their voices should be only considered as partial opinions of the events that have become the interest of this essay. They provide a partial account of the recent events and serve to initiate a theoretical reflection on the possibilities of the performative in architectural education, which is precisely the intention of this essay.

knowledge is essential –, seemed to have served to expose topics of concern within the students body, complementing traditional methods of communication such as forums, letters and talks.

In order to offer context, the essay offers a brief history of the EA's foundation and early years as well as a short account of the socio-political events that allowed for these spatial performances to occur. From that point on, the text focuses on raising questions regarding the possible intersections between performative practices and the spatial knowledges commonly associated with training in architecture. As a theoretical framework, the essay will establish references to other experiences in teaching architecture and arts.

Notions of Dissidence

As Ines Weizman asserts architecture often has difficulties articulating a dissident position. Specifically Weizman affirms that:

> *Architecture is perhaps the least likely of practices to articulate a dissident position. Producing buildings requires political powers that control the two main conditions necessary for construction to occur – land and money. These are largely conservative and institutional. But the position of architecture – at the nexus where political, commercial, financial military, ideological, cultural forces operate – also has the potential to serve as the medium for articulating ideas of resistance, critique, reform or evasion.* (Weizman, 2014, p.6)

At the same time, Architecture schools occupy a fundamental role, as Weizman establishes, in the articulation of such ideas. Since schools are partially free from the inherent pressures of building and market economies, they can observe building practices and explore associated phenomena from different positions, with the ability to shift, transform, ask questions and cross disciplinary boundaries while doing so. Weizman affirms "schools have, in particular areas and situations in both east and west, become the sites of dissident politics,

providing alternative sites of free thinking, imagination and political dissent *through* architecture" (Weizman, 2014, p.6).

Despite the opportunities that an academic context offers to reflect upon the discipline's condition, consistent efforts require systematic use of theories and thinking methods. Given its geopolitical situation, the EA has had a tendency to focus on land planning and urban problems, social dwelling as well as in the development, within design studios, of institutional typologies. Design exercises are sometimes understood as solutions to specific realities or social needs. In this approach, experimentation and imagination – as means to analyse and defy constructed notions of reality – tend to occupy a more peripheral position. Scholarship suggests that this situation is partially related to the EA's foundation. In the EA, where a progress narrative – in which aiding development occupied a central role – seems to have overpowered the EA's foundational tradition on experimenting with intersections between architecture and the arts (Solano-Meza, 2017a). In the recent "October events", spatial performances designed and executed by architecture students served, as means to question a perceived lack of experimentation, obsolete knowledge transfer practices, the role of architecture in national politics, and, more comprehensively, the future of the discipline in the country. The results of these spatial performances were timid but offered opportunities to question certain practices, thus becoming objects of interest.

A Brief History of the School of Architecture and its "experimental" performative tradition

The EA was founded in 1968 and begun operations in 1971 under an experimental programme. The programme had no specific subjects and all activities converged in the design studios. The course complemented techno-scientific knowledges with interests in freeing and exposing individual design processes. The first can be traced to the experience of the EA's intellectual founders – Rafael "Felo" Garcia, Jorge Bertheau and Edgar Brenes – at the Department of Development

and Tropical Studies (DDTS) at the Architectural Association (AA) (Solano-Meza, 2017a). The second, the concern with the promotion of freedom and individual expression, also came, at least partially, from the three founders and other teachers such as Franz Beer, who were at the same time influenced by the work of Jon Chris Jones on design methods and creative thinking (Jones, 1992). During its first decade, the School was envisioned as a multidisciplinary hub, where tradition was to be constantly questioned through arts, science and architecture (García, 2013). Felo Garcia himself is known as one of Costa Rica's most important painters and considered by scholars as one of the plastic artists responsible for introducing abstract expressionism to Costa Rica in the 1960's (Zavaleta, 1994). He often used the EA's premises as his painting studio to allow students to participate in his creative process and in an attempt to blur boundaries between architecture and the arts[3].

In fact, the intersections between techno-scientific knowledge – clearly shaped by the links with the DDTS – and individual free expression constituted one of the School's paradoxical and often conflicting foundational premises. Perhaps, this premise was only overpowered by the premise of aiding through architecture in the country's development, at a time when, as part of a political project, progress was rendered essential[4] (Solano-Meza, 2017b). One of the original areas at the School used to address expression techniques (*Técnicas de Expresión* or TEX) as central part of creative processes. TEX were not limited to drawing or representation but sought to explore the connections between architecture, staging, drama and performative arts, in the tradition of the Bauhaus or the Valparaíso School in Chile. Experiments with cameras and filming were also constant as part of the School's explorations.

During the School's first years, architects and artists from South America, mainly from Chile and Argentina visited Costa Rica as invited lectures at the

[3] These recollections are part of an ongoing set of interviews with staff members and first generations of the School. Interviews are being carried by the author and assisting undergraduate students.

[4] Note that such notion of progress is constructed from Western perspectives of progress and development.

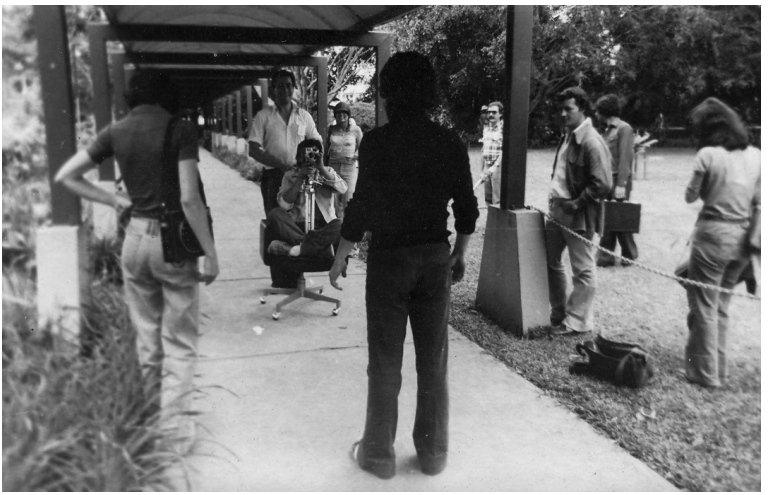

Figure 1. Students filming "Dos Puntos" a short film produced at the School, mid 1970's. Courtesy of architect Rodolfo Granados. The film tells the story of a man and a woman running from opposite point in the capital city of San José to encounter

School, as many were subject of political persecution in their native countries, which were at the time under military rule: Fernán Meza, Germán Arestizábal and Juan Bernal Ponce, who opted to remain and teach in Costa Rica for the rest of his life, while the first two returned to South America. Meza and Arestizábal were interested in pushing limits regarding expression and movement. They deeply influenced the first generations of students. Bernal Ponce had a more traditional Beaux Arts approach to aesthetics and composition. As he remained in the EA for many years, its influence over aesthetic notions and composition is still tangible. Future studies should address his work and pedagogical inputs to the school.

If originally, there was an existing, and interesting, contradiction between experimentation, freedom and technical rigor, gradually the persecution of theoretical and performative experimentation as a means to produce knowledge has been overshadowed by concerns with aiding in the country's development

Figure 2. Students filming "Dos Puntos" a short film produced at the School, mid 1970's. Courtesy of architect Rodolfo Granados

through building, technology application – often associated with tropical climate – and what could be called an "approach to reality". In other words, building techniques, knowledge of legal and institutional framework, technical data and urbanism principles seem to occupy a relevant position, while experimental architectures and theoretical approaches have remained peripheral to design practices[5]. Although reasons for this condition are complex and would require specific studies, a few causes can be pointed out: institutional pressure from the UCR for the School to structure its curricular programme, association to the Faculty of Engineering – paradoxically the School of Architecture is adjunct to this faculty – , the loss of teaching staff associated to arts and spatial performance, lost links with international institutions such as the AA and the

[5] It is relevant to point out that this condition is not negative in itself but suggests an imbalance in the School's programme.

DPU[6], and an infamous auditing process – known as *La Intervención* – led by the UCR's Council from 1988 to 1989 which sought to end curricular and serious organisational issues within the EA, the transition from a comprehensive structure towards a subject by subject organisation and the division of the School's curriculum in areas: design, histories and theories and techno-science[7]. Perhaps, the main reason for the almost absolute abandonment of performative practices – or its dissolution in the midst of building oriented design exercises – was the lack of definition regarding concepts such as experimenting and innovating. The EA's first documents – its first programme and following dissertations and curricula – show a great interest in exploring, experimenting and in contesting boundaries imposed by a conservative society to creative professions such as architecture. The original staff considered defying tradition as an essential part of the EA's existence, given the Costa Rican context, at the time experiencing complex cultural and social transformations related to political change, (Molina Jiménez, 2015). Also, it is possible to assert that the EA's first curricula were certainly influenced by the spirit of 68 and by the experimental architectures seen at the AA, hence a sort of radical attitude was always present, (Bertheau, 2014). The experimental spirit of the EA's first years – infused by its intellectual founders and key personas – seems to have been shared by most students and the rest of the staff, but its implications often carried different meanings. As Eva Díaz affirms regarding the experiences at the famous Black Mountain College:

[6] Artists and also graduates from the AA and other institutions do form part of the teaching staff, however collective practices related to art and official links between institutions seems to have faded. In recent years, these condition has started to change, however future studies will be needed to review impact.

[7] In the 1980's Costa Rica, as many other Latin American countries, experienced an economical crisis associated with oil prices, inflation and a failing economical model. The impact of the economical depression in education has been studied in detailed by scholars. Some of the School's conditions listed above are, undoubtedly, associated with this crisis. "La Intervención" saw the end of the 1980's decade at a time where teaching practices and culture had become damaging for staff and students. The auditing processes and its effects have not been academically studied yet.

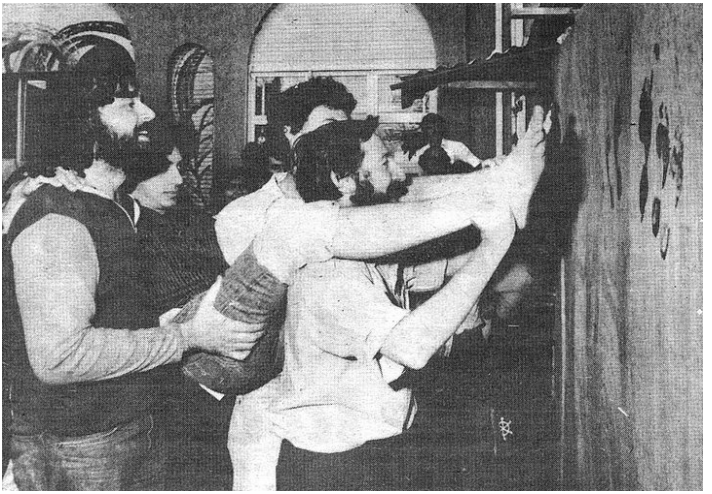

Figure 3. Students in the School of Architecture in the mid 1970's. The School's first years were marked by aspirations to experiment, seek individual knowledge and develop free from "prejudice" design processes. The image is part of the collection of architect Rodolfo Granados and it also part from the School's archive. It shows a group of students performing ludic activities

> *Seemingly everyone who attended Black Mountain College shared a desire to experiment, though they did not necessarily agree on what this meant. In particular, competing and even incompatible approaches to experimentation were advanced (...).* (Díaz, 2015, p.1)

As Díaz points out, in the case of Black Mountain, interdisciplinary discussions were "glued" by the desire to experiment (Díaz, 2015, p.4). Díaz affirms, however that "the frequent invocation of the experiment (...) cannot disguise the fact that the concept to which appealed was and remains deeply contradictory" (Díaz, 2015, p.4). This may also apply to the case of the EA. As the author suggests contradiction around the concept has to do with the "compound meanings of the word experiment" and also with the "the historically shifting relationship between concepts such as innovation and tradition, or originality and routine" (Díaz, 2015, p.4).

A short account of recent events

In October 2019, a large group of architecture students – approximately 150 from an active population of 600 – decided to hold and shut down the building of the School of Architecture at the University of the UCR. The students' decision occurred in the middle of a political crisis triggered by attempts of the government of Costa Rican president Carlos Alvarado to internally redistribute part of the national funding destined, by law, to public universities. These attempts led to a series of protests in the students body of the four main public universities: *Universidad de Costa Rica*, *Universidad Nacional*, *Instituto Tecnológico de Costa Rica and Universidad Nacional a Distancia*, and were criticised by the universities' high authorities who considered them potential violations to the autonomy of higher public education in Costa Rica. Autonomy for universities is rendered a historical achievement of the social-democracy that ruled and influenced the national agenda in the second half of the twentieth century, (Miranda Camacho, 2010).

During these events, other various buildings within the UCR main campus, *Ciudad Universitaria Rodrigo Facio*, located in the outskirts of the capital city of San José were taken and shut down by students, such as the Faculty of Education and the Faculty of Social Sciences. Actions were replicated in other campuses[8].

While the EA's building was shut down, on October 22 of 2019 students and staff of public universities marched to protest against the government' intention to partially control the distribution of the higher education mandatory fund or *Fondo Especial para la Educación Superior* (FEES) a fund that by law guarantees an 1.5% of the country's gross product to be destined to public higher education and allows universities to invest their capital without the interference of the central government[9]. The UCR, as the country's largest higher education receives

[8] The other universities mentioned also had their own movements, this paper will focus on those within the UCR. The UCR has various campuses throughout the country.

[9] The FEES in negotiated every 5 years by the four deans of the public universities and the central government.

57% of the FEES. At the end of that day, the four deans of the four universities, students representation and the president himself sat down to negotiate. Negotiations eventually led to the government's apparent acceptance of the universities terms. However, at the moment this paper was written conflicts and legal processes were still on course regarding budget allocation.

On that day, the emblematic building of the EA – designed by Edgar Brenes – appeared covered in black fabrics by the students' decision: a performative act suggesting an intention to expose a political stance regarding the events cited above, but also an intent to raise questions about the role of the EA and its ability to adapt to a world in transformation – *see figure 4* –. According to students voices, an intention to allow discussion and promote eventual transformation was fundamental in their decisions and actions[10]. Overall, the act of covering the six-story building seems to have had more symbolic impact over the students and the staff than the result itself. Although timid, their action could be considered as performance in the sense that it implicated an active and physical involvement from the students' body. In it, the building served as the stage and also as a subject, one trying to tell a story of action over concerns about the future.

Performative arts as a means to expose concerns

In order to reopen the building and resume regular activities, the student group negotiated with the EA's principal to allow for time and spaces – otherwise dedicated to formal teaching – to discuss the School's current condition and needs of transformation ideas as identified by students. During these negotiated spaces, students designed a series of small performative events with the aim to expose specific circumstances that needed to be made visible from their perspective.

[10] Refer to first footnote.

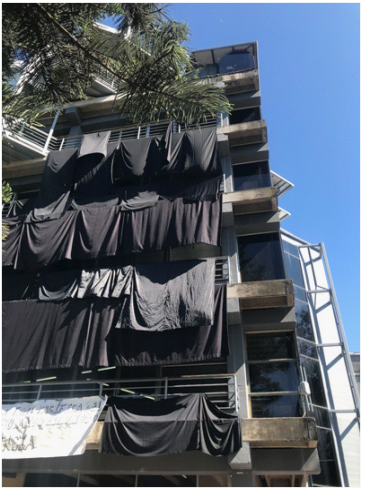

Figure 4. School of Architecture at the University of Costa Rica in black fabrics, taken by the author, 2019

One of the exercises simulated the future location of restrooms inside the design studios. The perfomance objective was to point out the need to discuss the built intervention, its aesthetics and impact over the current layout and consequent functionality of the space. The design, according to students – and a portion of faculty members – lacked integration with the EA's building, which was designed in the late seventies by one of its intellectual founders. Historically, the building has had a deficiency in the amount and quality of the restrooms for reasons related to the original design layout, budget and and failure to adapt to changes in population, policies and regulations. However, the UCR's proposal to build restrooms affecting the open layout of the building have raised questions about its quality and impact.

Another exercise, which calls for a future and more detailed assessment, attempted to criticise the nature of a skills test – *Prueba de Habilidad* – which is

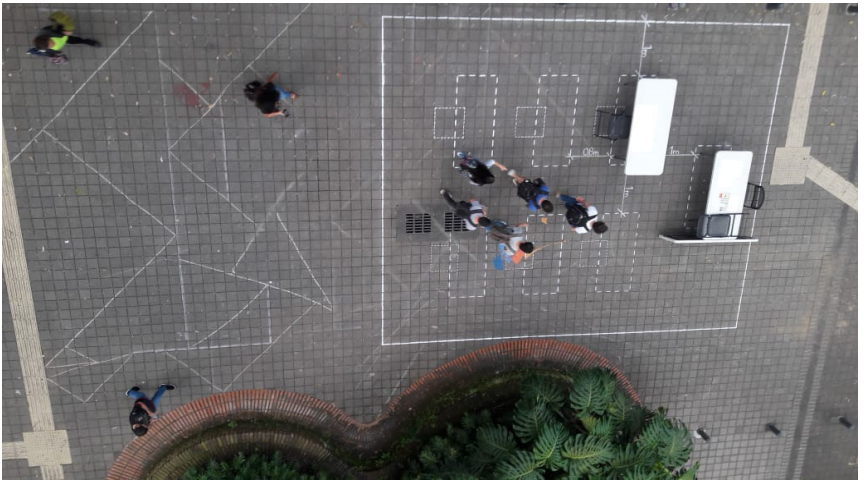

Figure 5. A performance replicated the dispositions of desks in the plaza outside the EA's building, courtesy of Juan Leiva, an advanced architecture student, 2019

mandatory for admission at the EA[11]. The test attempts to measure the skills of future architecture students regarding space, construction and problem solving. Usually at the test, future students are given a list of materials and a problem that needs to be spatially solved using those materials. The nature and contents of the skills test will not be examined here, however I would like to point out that a future exploration of its nature seems necessary. In this text, the skills test is only of interest as the event that served as the basis for the students' spatial performance.

From the students' perspective the performance allowed them to point out and express their concerns regarding the future of architecture education within the EA. One of their concerns was related to the skills that future architects are

[11] In order to provide brief context: the test was established in 1998 as an intent to control admission and the profile of students. Historically, since then, first year staff and the EA's principals have been involved in the assessment of the test.

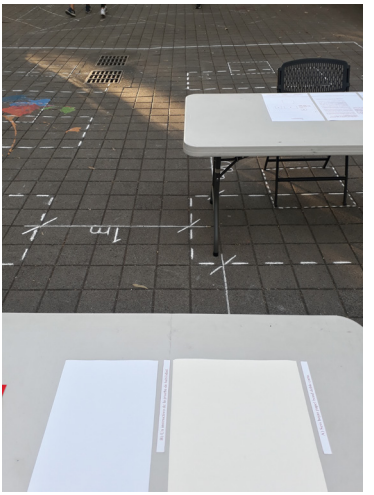

Figure 6. Students replicated the desks's disposition from the skills test, courtesy of Juan Leiva, 2019

expected to have in a changing environment, shaped by social, environmental and economical crisis. Furthermore, the silent performance about the disposition of the desks during the test, the providing of the list of allotted materials and the "mocking" of the given instructions attempted to show an implied rigidity in the test itself. Perhaps, the acting performance also exposed the consolidation to seek for an inherent "talent" for technical construction rather than for other types of spatial intuitions and knowledges. This sort of profiling seems to be latent in teaching practices since admission. However, it needs to be further examined.

Opportunities for Dissidence?

Students were interested in discussing the future of the EA in the specific context of Costa Rica. These events, and their performative nature, could be considered attempts to dissent from the institutionalised canon – transfered in architecture

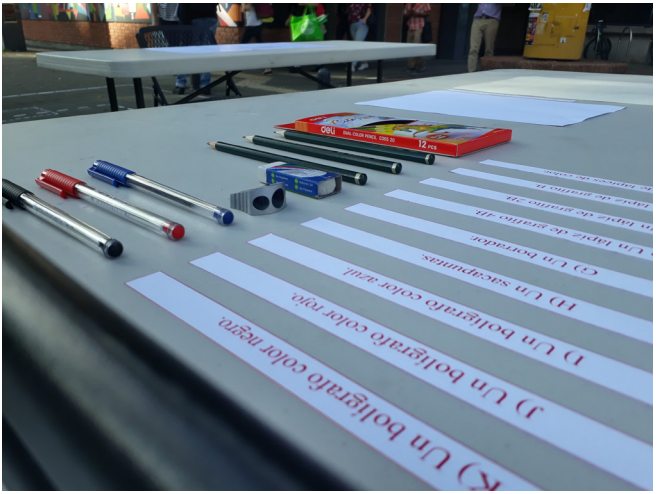

Figure 7. Students also listed the materials that are employed at the skills test. Courtesy of Juan Leiva, 2019

schools – of what architecture professionals need to know and are expected to do. In other words, performative events served to partially question the skills and knowledges that future architects are expected to have. The building shut down was, as one anonymous student claims, an attempt to achieve "something related to the nature of their training in architecture". This is relevant, as Magali Sarfatti Larson suggests, because "the autonomous discourse of the profession – the knowledge it produces by and for itself – is articulated, transmitted, and, above all, received in schools" (Sarfatti Larson, 1995, p.11). The students' spatial performances seem to have operated as a sort of opposition, as a sort of obstacle to this rigid autonomous discourse that promotes technical knowledges. They were small-scaled and rather timid. However, the represent an opportuniy to systematically question the role of the school and the profession in Costa Rica. They were opportunities for dissidence, as they attempted to "question the relationship of the architect and political power, (...) between ideology and the

built form" (Weizman, 2014, p.7) an this case the relationship between a school, the cluster of knowledges and skills it offers and its students. For the EA, these spatial performances offered an opportunity to promote a collective discussion about disciplinary boundaries. At the same time, crossings with performative arts seem to offer possibilities when exposing critical or theoretical problems. Because of its "dramatic nature" they allowed the exploration of architecture related problems from different perspectives, hence offering chances for new readings concerned with architectural training.

These "spatial performances" seem to constitute an opportunity to explore dissent in relationship to architecture's disciplinary boundaries and reduced or simplistic notions about design and building and the social role of architects. As Alberto Pérez-Gómez affirms: "the experience of architecture is never merely spatial, and yet what passes today for architectural design is often no more than a manipulation of geometric spatial concepts". As Peréz Gómez continues "our lived world is rich in sensations and emotions that arise from our bodily actions and engagement in the world" (Pérez-Gómez, 2016, p.16). Pérez Gómez establishes a connection between architecture and the dramatic arts, by recalling how the use of the word *architect* in dramatic plays of classical tradition.

> *The call "to architect" appears in works such as Cyclops by Euripides and Peace by Aristophanes, plays that reveal the cultural roots, connotations, and expectations associated with the person of the architect and his actions, a term that would eventually (a few centuries later) give its name to the latin discipline of Architectura. This understanding adds a new dimension to the more conventional understanding of the architect as "master craftsman", which has been taken for granted in most histories of architecture.* (Pérez-Gómez, 2016, p.16)

The dimension, Pérez Gómez refers to opens a series of possibilities, again associated with the exploration of the discipline boundaries utilising

performative practices, not only as interdisciplinary tools but as inherent pieces of architecture's own core. Also, political and environmental transformations suggest the need to formulate new questions, regarding the skills that are developed within architecture schools through certain pedagogical practices and studio exercises. This seems relevant in school located in the Global South, as performative practices may also serve to challenge notions of development, design and architectural culture.

In the case of the EA, opportunities to include performative exercises seem to have the potential to aid in the construction of critical analysis. However in order for these efforts to become effective in opening discussions about the EA's course and its syllabuses, continuity and systematisation seem necessary. In that sense, recollections and archival work addressing the EA's history offer new perspectives regarding the role of performative events in the EA's academic culture.

This work is part of a research project hosted by the School of Architecture and funded by the Vicerectoría de Investigación of the Universidad de Costa Rica. I particularly thank the students who collaborated and shared their experiences. In the COVID scenario, their efforts seem to have faded and hopefully will be soon resumed.

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ABSTRACTS

WORD AND FLESH: FRAMING THE SPACE IN THEATRICAL PERFORMANCES IN CHURCHES

Bridget Foreman

This paper considers the intersection between theatre and church architecture, where churches stand as site-generic venues for performance. It examines the various manifestations of space within churches: the physical architectural space, with its codified language of Elam's fixed and semi-fixed features, the articulation of spiritual ideology that constitutes a conceptual space, and the congregational space, where a community of interest embodies a human architecture.

Building on Clifford McLucas's *Ghost, Host and Witness*, the paper expands upon the transformative influence of space on theatre dramaturgy and scenography, using as a case study my play 'Simeon's Watch', which toured rural UK churches. Gay McAuley's description of space as 'crucial to understanding the nature of the performance event and how meanings are constructed and communicated' informs the paper's presentation of the ways in which a lived space can be re-articulated through the participatory experience of those who inhabit it, while at the same time their group identity is transformed by the nature of the experience they undergo within the space. It argues that performance oscillates between a series of architectural and theatrical frames, engaging the audience in an effective and affective conversation that shifts their perspective and mode of engagement. Finally, it proposes that site-generic spaces can inform aspects of playwriting as well as creating a commentary upon the play at the point of performance, thereby providing an architectural context within which aspects of the performance's significance are altered.

GIULIO CAMILLO: SCENOGRAPHER OF MEMORY IN A DRAMATIC ARCHITECTURE

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HOLD: EVENT-SPACE AND CONTAINERIZATION IN THE TIME OF COVID-19
Dorita Hannah

For well over a century, the enduring Italianate theatre with its numbered seating matrix – fixing us side by side to collectively face a prescribed stage – has been increasingly rejected by experimental performing arts practitioners seeking alternative sites that enable a more critical engagement with the 'real' and a self-organising public. Such recognition, that live performance can neither be permanently housed nor securely contained, led to a proliferation of 'pop-up' venues in the first two decades of the 21st century. Born out of economic necessity, these expeditious, flexible and low-cost solutions repurposed vacant sites for temporarily accommodating nomadic theatre, restaurants, bars, clubs and shops, leading to innovative ways of gathering communities to participate in public space through deliberately anti-commercial urban regeneration. However, as will unfold throughout this paper, such revitalizing phenomena tend to become commercially co-opted to normalize insecure conditions, while operating as short-term gentrifying agents that glorify precarity for longer-term capitalist ends. Nowhere is this more prevalent than in the rise of shipping container architecture, which requires close scrutiny in order to consider its inherent socio-political performativity in our current age of neoliberal markets, global trafficking and a worldwide pandemic.

As a means of coming to terms with the Container Globe – a proposed mobile pop-up venue, the design of which I helped develop a decade ago – my paper focuses on the intermodal shipping container as a spatial module in which myth and theatre become entangled with global logistics, specifically in relation to the built environment as performance space and spatial performativity. This is particularly prescient at the close of 2020, a year in which the coronavirus pandemic forced the closure of theatres, while highlighting and destabilizing the harsh realities of a globalized world. Yet Covid-19 shows us that contaminants can be neither easily controlled nor confined: that they evade borders, invade bodies and propagate silently, quickly and without prejudice. What are the repercussions for theatre architecture as a container of performance events and those who gather to witness them?

OCCUPATION AND TRANSFORMATION OF OLD WAREHOUSES AT RIO DE JANEIRO DOCKLANDS AREA INTO THEATRICAL SPACES. PERFORMATIVE EXPERIENCES IN THE 21st CENTURY
Evelyn Furquim Werneck Lima

The challenge for theatrical groups concerned with socially engaged theatre is to reduce the impasses of capitalism through performing arts activities in alternative venues to ensure the full exercise of citizenship. The appropriation of the industrial heritage warehouses not originally intended to be theatrical opened new possibilities for the performing arts, besides the option of working at different scales, and producing dramatic architectures. Theatre has always transformed stages into diverse spaces, but currently, space itself has transformed theatre. This paper aims to examine vacant warehouses occupation at Rio de Janeiro Docklands as theatrical spaces, examining two performative experiences: Euclides da Cunha's *Os Sertões*, an Oficina Theatre production (2007), and Machiavelli's *La Mandragola* staged by Companhia Ensaio Aberto (2019). Both venues are old industrial structures in Rio de Janeiro docklands. To perform the *Sertões* in Rio de Janeiro, director Zé Celso chose the oldest storage building of the docks area in Rio de Janeiro (built in 1871) and adapted the ritualistic production to the building's huge basilica shape. Actors and audience images were edited in real-time and projected on a large screen. Celso established no boundaries between the audience and the stage, as actors came up to the stands and spectators descended to the scenic area, socializing with the performers. On the other hand, to stage *La Mandragola*, director Luiz Fernando Lobo built a rough arena in a rectangular space surrounded by rustic wood stands, having three large tables as the stage for the Renaissance piazza inside one chosen location inside a huge warehouse. The exposed brick structure and the effects of scenic lighting contributed to the play's atmosphere in which all actions happen in front of the spectator, highlighting the contradictions between the public and the private. In both performances, spectators and performers were bodies in movement, true events in total harmony with the 'found spaces'.

HOW DID MY PARENTS GET TO THE UNDERPASS? EXAMINATION OF A NON-THEATRICAL PERFORMANCE IN AN URBAN PUBLIC SPACE
Gabriella Kiss

In this paper, I present a case study of my scenography project, a performance in an urban public space. The venue for this project was an abandoned underpass hidden underground in a city. In this case there is nothing reminiscent of traditional theatre, because for the scenography, the entire available space was needed. Therefore, a new place had to be found for everything that had previously been in a traditional theatre.
The trappings of traditional theatre become unstable in this case: there is no entrance, auditorium, or stage. Everyday passers-by went through the 'stage': the underpass. Many questions arose in the new situation: where is the place of the auditorium? Where is the stage? In fact, where are we?
The other pivotal point of the project was that the place, the underpass, was the starting point of the project. That means the story of the performance was specific, and arose from the place and could not be separated from it without damage.
In my paper I will examine how aspects, 'layers' of the place could relate to the story which is 'ghosted' in them, and I will show important points of the creation process of the performance. Along with that, I will answer the question: how did my parents get to the underpass?
I will present the result of the project, a hybrid of "architectural installation and performance". The 'Praesenoscop Augmented Reality Boxes', which were parts of this, were filled with individual stories. These were the 'Ghosts' of the place, in the sense of McLucas. These boxes interacted with spectators and allowed them to look through the 'real' world, during the special time frame of the performance.
This study attempts to discuss the spatial questions of performative place, space, and the change in relationship between spectators and actors.

SPATIAL THEATRE FOR ARCHITECTS: EXERCISES FOR STUDENTS
Gray Read

If the city is the theater of urban life, then buildings might be considered not just the backdrop or stage set, but active partners in everything that goes on. How, then, can architects learn to recognize and then to design good partners that will act with and among people in the many small dramas of daily life? In classes at the Florida International University School of Architecture I developed a series of exercises based in theater that invite young architects to consider how buildings act socially. In design studio students in pairs constructed a third actor to participate with them in a performance that addressed one of architecture's fundamental social qualities. In a weeklong workshop in Genoa, Italy students made short videos that combined scenes with drawings to explore the inherent drama of architectural elements – door, wall, steps. In large classes, student teams analyzed our School of Architecture building to find places of dramatic potential, which they interpreted in 10-second videos and drew in storyboard, plan and section. More advanced students developed drawing techniques to show the social life of buildings. Composite sections and 'analytique' drawings show the true dimensions of architecture merged with photos that invoke how those spaces are inhabited. Graphic novel techniques incorporating architectural drawings tell stories in place. All of these exercises investigate interactions between built spaces and people to develop a more urbane and ecological approach to design.

THE CURVE IS RUINOUS: ARCHITECTURE AND THE PERFORMATIVE INTERVENTION *SPIRALS*
Hari Marini

This paper investigates the ways in which architecture can be re-thought and re-imagined via performative interventions that take place in derelict spaces. I focus on the ongoing performance work entitled Spirals (2013-ongoing http://www.partsuspended.com/productions/current/spirals/) created by PartSuspended performance group that employs leftover spaces in cities around Europe (London, Broadstairs, Barcelona, Belgrade, Coventry, Athens) where interventions and spatial performative gestures based on the symbol of a spiral are filmed. In Spirals the group seeks to articulate the female experience of time, movement, memory, nature and sense of belonging in a poetic and innovative way. By employing spiralling lines, the project

challenges concepts dictated by straight lines and established order. Le Corbusier, in the early 1900s, seeking perfection and order in architecture and urban planning, passionately supported the link of modern architecture with 'geometrical truths'. He celebrated the straight line and the right angle, whilst he rejected the curve as being ruinous and dangerous. How does Spirals project oppose authoritarian conclusions based on strict geometrical values which often emphasise the utilitarian side of architectural planning and design that still governs urban spaces and architecture? The paper explores how the project re-invents city-spaces and calls participants, audience and city-users to re-discover the accidental and the improvisatory through walking, performance and spiralling lines. In my discussion, I identify restrictions and preconceptions placed upon architecture and ruined spaces, whilst I exemplify how alternative artistic spatial practices generate new interpretations of architecture and let us re-imagine cityscapes as places for creative and poetic exchange.

THE HOURS: THE (FE)MALE GAZE?

Isabel Lousada and Vanda de Sousa

In the film *The Hours* by Stephen Daldry, we will grind out, the interpretation of the literary convention renowned the midday topos. Without losing sight that this film is a cinematique adaptation of Michael Cunningham's novel *The Hours*, which mirrors and features Virginia Woolf's novel Mrs. Dalloway, we will show that the midday topos, which recurs in both the novels, persists discernible also in the movie trough means of audio-visual syntax: scenography, lighting, colors, shots and camera movements, so maintaining that women are advised not to expose themselves to the midday sun and thus remain confined inside their homes. The director envisaged differently the female characters of Virginia Woolf, Laura Brown, and Mrs. Dalloway from the male characters of Leonard Woolf, Dan Brown, and Richard Brown. The scenography, lighting, and mise-en-scène lend the convention to female characters while exposing the relationship between female and writing – by hand, typographic, printed, digital.

We will argue that the implicit gender discrimination relates to the feminist movement in three different moments, namely, the 1920s, 1950s, and 2001. Finally, despite its production is dominated by three men (i. e. Stephen Daldry as a director, David Hare as a screenplay writer, and Philip Glass' music score), this film text does not induce the male gaze, allowing us to position it as a relevant film text to both gender studies and film studies.

MAPPING MEMORIES. EXPLORING INTANGIBLE HERITAGE THROUGH PLAYWRITING: AN ARCHITEXTURAL APPROACH

Jenny Knotts

Built in 1878, the Citizens Theatre, Glasgow is the most significant producing theatre in the west of Scotland. The Grade B-listed building is one of the few physical remnants of the once bustling Gorbals community in which it resides. The theatre, therefore, is more than just a performance venue: it is a site of significant cultural and social interest. In June 2018, work began on the most radical redevelopment in the building's history. This means that spaces shared by staff, patrons and artists for generations, richly layered with social, cultural and personal stories, will be altered, repurposed or lost completely.

My Practice-as-Research PhD, 'Play/writing Histories: Navigating the Personal, Public and Institutional stories of theatre space. An Architextural study of the Citizens Theatre', seeks to reveal, explore and preserve the hidden histories of this iconic building through creative practice. To do this, I am developing a methodology for 'architexting', a mode of playwriting that explores the overlapping histories of sites through the dramaturgy of their architecture. Through architexting, I consider how architectural processes may be interpreted dramaturgically to provide a new approach to investigating space.

In this paper I will discuss the creation of my architext 'Blueprint'. Constructed using material from interviews with over 60 participants associated with the Citizens Theatre, these plays harness architectural drawing techniques to provide a dramaturgical framework for investigating memories and stories as they co-exist within the building. In this way, seemingly disparate moments in time are connected by site, offering an opportunity to mine diachronic relationships, identifying and exploring points

of connection or conflict that a chronological exploration may not permit whilst simultaneously revealing the relationship between the building's tangible and intangible heritage.

DESIGNING SOCIAL SPACE THROUGH PERFORMANCE: AN EXPERIENCE OF SOCIAL PERFORMANCE IN A POST-INDUSTRIAL LANDSCAPE

Jorge Palinhos

Between 2016 and 2018, the international project "Reclaim the future: Nomadic carnivals for change" established an alliance between theatre companies of the northern outskirts of Europe to explore and reflect on the capacity of outlying societies to effect change at the centre of power.

The Portuguese carnival, directed by Portuguese scenographer Inês de Carvalho, took place in a post-industrial area of Porto – Campanhã, which is presently undergoing a urban renewal that aims to redefine the urban and social reality of the zone. The proposal of Visões Úteis entailed a social performance involving social actors of the area which staged a carnival across the main landmarks of the area. This carnival attempted not only to bridge different spaces of the area, but also different times, recovering memories of the community, but also future expectations, in a way that, I argue in this paper, tried to establish an utopian social space, based on Medieval and Renaissance theatre techniques.

THE MEMORY OF A DISAPPEARED ARCHITECTURAL TYPOLOGY OF THE POPULAR PERFORMANCE: THE CIRCUS-THEATRES IN SPAIN

Josefina González Cubero and Leonor De Meer González

The circus-theatres of the 19th and early 20th centuries meant the appearance on the architectural scene of a hybrid typology dedicated to hosting the multiplicity of popular performances (theatre, circus, variety shows and cinema). Both the spatial configuration they developed and the types of shows they contained exerted a great influence on the avant-garde for the regeneration of modern theatre and, in many cases, these buildings were the gateway to the cinematograph.

Europe saw the birth of the circus-theatres and witnessed the subsequent and important proliferation of buildings in its geography of which Spain was not alien, although they have practically disappeared in the country at present. Therefore, collecting, mapping and researching these performance halls, designed and built on a temporary or permanent basis, gives indications of the magnitude of their presence in the Spanish cities where they were established and completes the architectural spectrum of the scene in them, often more focused on the buildings and staging of the bourgeois theatre.

FOOTBRIDGE AUDITORIUM

Katarzyna Zawistowska

There is no doubt that the study on visual perception has advanced in recent times. If we want to get a viewer fully involved in performance, we should remember about the role of all his senses in the perception. Nowadays, the viewer seems to perceive the performance in a different way than 100 years ago and that is why we should focus on the viewer as a main user of theatrical space who is already aware of relational aesthetics and participating art.

My main area of interest is auditorium as a spatial structure. Auditorium is also a part of public space which means that every passer-by may become a viewer when exceeding the threshold of theatre. It is a performative moment but after that one is obliged to seat in the dark auditorium and has almost all his senses blocked except for hearing and seeing which result in becoming a passive viewer.

20th century Avant-Garde projects focused on the relations between auditorium and stage, but they did not bring us any new idea of the perception of performance!

As a result of mechanical rotation, Gropius in his Total Theatre (1927) gave us three possible options of stage and audience. This idea of mechanical rotating was developing by polish architect, Syrkus, in his Simultaneous Theatre (1928), where the stage got shape as two rotate rings. Both architects designed amphiteatrical type of auditorium, so viewers were passive in reception of performance. Both theatres had never been built. Today, when technology has advanced and we can construct those theatres, my question is: what might be changed for spectator when

auditorium still reproduces patterns from the past? It is the time to search for a more up-to-date architecture of auditorium!
The new type is a footbridge auditorium where viewers can move and change their viewing position during the performance thanks of ramps which can bring them behind-the-scenes and show the hidden infrastructure behind of the Fourth Wall.

THE SCENOGRAPHIC SPACE(S) OF AUGMENTED REALITY
Lucy Thornett

Despite renewed interest in immersive and mixed reality technologies in theatre and performance, there is little work to date that examines this area of practice from a scenographic perspective. This paper will make a case for the scenographic potential of augmented reality. Augmented reality is not understood here in terms of a particular technology, rather I define it as any handheld or wearable technology that augments space at the level of the body. The paper argues that augmented reality can be conceptualised, like scenography, as a relational and spatial practice. This notion will be discussed in the context of a practice-led experiment in augmented reality scenography, Ernest Remains. Ernest Remains was an installation staged at the University of Leeds for one audience member at a time, where audiences explored the space using a handheld tablet. The analysis draws on audience responses from post-show interviews and my reflection on my own experience of the installation. I argue that a scenographic perspective helps us to think through how augmented reality, through an embodied relation with technology, produces affective, speculative space(s). Furthermore, I contend that the relational virtuality of augmented reality can expand our understandings of how affectivity operates in scenography.

THEATRICAL ARCHITECTURAL BUILDINGS AND COMMUNITY: TEATRO CONTÊINER MUNGUNZÁ
Luísa Pinto

Which roles do the theatrical architectural buildings play nowadays?
How does the symbolic universe evolve (resist) in the performing space, in view of the contemporary scene requiring different resources and spatiality as a possibility of experimentation, allowing a greater proximity to the audience?
To what extent does spatial arrangement influences the creation of an artistic object in contemporaneity, allowing a greater proximity to the audience and how it is redefined by new functions and by new social actors in a certain territorial context?
This study aims to reflect on the roles that architecture can play, as a symbolic performing space, in search for alternative paths for a new artistic practice, through the enhancement of the stage, the community and the public space.

THE USE OF SCENOGRAPHIC INTERVENTIONS FOR SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT IN CONTESTED PUBLIC SPACES: THE CASE OF THE SOUTH WALLED CITY OF NICOSIA
Marina Hadjilouca

In recent years, public space has been increasingly replaced by private or quasi-private forms of space that are accessible to a selected segment of the society (Hirt, 2014). The privatization of public space entails increasingly alienation of people from the possibilities of inherent social interactions and increasing control by powerful economic and social actors over the production and use of space (Mitchel, 1995). Over the last decade, this phenomenon has been permeating the south walled city of Nicosia, in Cyprus, the site where this research project is focusing its investigation. Within the last decade the south side of the old city has been transformed from a neglected, semi-derelict district into a hip part of the capital, to spend leisure time and to reside in. The few public spaces of the walled city, are acquiring a privatized character promoting the exclusion of specific social groups (anarchists, immigrants, lower social classes). This paper will concentrate on a square within the walled city of Nicosia, called Phaneromeni. The square is threatened by privatization, following a course of rapid gentrification and the removal of all the public benches within the Square. This paper will discuss the ongoing practice-led research that investigates the role of the performance designer in questioning the publicness of such places.

Moreover, it will explore how the performance designer can act as agent to enable and in time maintain active co-existence within these spaces. This will be achieved by investigating the development of temporary scenographic interventions, which use performance design methods. A series of interventions designed and executed by the author will be analyzed, and make a case of how the use of performance design forms the key method for engagement and 'active co-existence' in such contested public spaces.

SEARCHING FOR DISSIDENCE IN THE SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF COSTA RICA: PERFORMATIVE ARTS AND ARCHITECTURE'S BOUNDARIES
Natalia Solano-Meza

In "Architecture and the Paradox of Dissidence", Ines Weizman asserts that architectural practices often have difficulties in articulating a dissident position within specific socio-political realities, given the discipline's dependence on land and money. In the Global South, these difficulties are often carried into teaching practices, as concerns regarding architecture's ability to comply with local market needs are commonly present in assignments and project's briefs.

Potential budget cuts at the University of Costa Rica, Central America's largest public university, have recently inspired an organised student's movement within the School of Architecture, founded only in 1968. Performative arts have come to occupy a position in the protests. Performance is both used to address general political issues and to claim for the need to tackle the declared obsolescence of syllabuses and pedagogical practices inside the School. During the process, architecture students have begun to explore the potential that rests in digital staging, performing and designing scenographic and temporal spaces as mediums for exploring architecture's disciplinary boundaries. In order to critique pedagogical practices, students have organised collective performances, often taking over public exterior spaces. In them, they dramatically replicate out of fashion spatial arrangements inside the design workshops, seeking to expose an obsolescent knowledge transfer culture. In another example, students have constructed fictional restrooms, in order to critique the lack of infrastructure in the building itself and the proposed institutional solution.

Utilising the recent events as starting point, this paper explores the theoretical intersections between architecture and the performative arts. The work concentrates on the opportunities that emerge from bringing a performative events into architectural education. Do performative arts create opportunities to contest narratives regarding the social function of architecture in the "Global South"? Do intersections between digital performances and architectural narratives serve to question pedagogical cultures?

VERTICAL KNOWLEDGE: EXPLORING THE POTENTIAL OF VERTICAL DANCE AS A SCENOGRAPHIC STRATEGY IN THE PERFORMANCE OF SITE
Natalie Rowland

The popularity of vertical dance performance is growing, with companies such as Gravity & Levity and Wired based in the UK, and the creation of the Vertical Dance Forum with its global membership leading the way. While it may be considered to fall within the spectacular, this paper argues for the role of vertical dance as a form of knowledge of space, environment and architecture.

This paper argues that vertical dance offers opportunities to engage with the affordances of environment and site in ways that have not been previously explored. The moving body interacting with and using buildings, walls or structures developing a new sense of the site and its relationships with its surroundings. This process in turn allowing for fresh perspectives and narratives to be introduced to the built environment.

Through an analysis of selected vertical dance performances, interviews with dancers as well as audience responses, this paper explores the potential of vertical dance to impart new knowledge of site through embodied learning and kinaesthetic empathy. The role of vision and the haptic will be discussed in relation to the ways in which movement and dance in (or on) site might contribute to a scenographic experience of the built environment. The paper argues that as place orientation, vertical dance may be considered as a scenographic strategy. The importance of

movement to this strategy as a processual way of being in and with the world, proposed as a way of knowing that is dynamic and full of potential.

SCENIC DESIGN AS A FIELD FOR EXPERIMENTATION BY ARCHITECTS: THE SET DESIGNS BY HERZOG & DE MEURON AND MORPHOSIS

Niuxa Drago

Architecture and set designs have historically shared investigations into the concepts of space, time dimensions, illusion, and reality. This article analyses the scenography projects of architects recognized for the coherence of their conceptual investigation, in order to understand how the stage has enabled the realization of experiments that push their research work forward. Here we investigate the set designs by Herzog & De Meuron for 'Tristan und Isolde' (Berlin Opera House, 2006) and 'Atilla' (Metropolitan Opera House, 2010), and the set designs by Morphosis for 'Silent Collisions' (Venice Dance Biennale, 2003). By crossing over reflections on art, theatre and architecture, by Hal Foster, Rafael Moneo, Beth Weinstein, Chris Salter, Thea Brejzek and the architects themselves, this investigation seeks to base set design and architectural projects in the same conceptual field claimed by each of the architects. In the work of Herzog & De Meuron, the screen and the texture of materials potentiate the lighting designs, raising questions regarding volume and flatness, as well as theatricality and reality. The same questions are experienced on the one hand, in their Dominus Winery, and on the other, in the Ricola pavilion. For Thom Mayne (Morphosis), the sense of time may be stimulated with the light and the memory of pure geometry, when the transformation maintained the "cube" as a reference. They threw light on the same issues in the Cooper Union School (2006) and the Snow Show Pavilion (2004). The works studied reflect in these artistic fields the contemporary notions of uncertainty, virtual perception and time superpositions. They reveal how the nature of theatre has taken architecture and launched it into a study on illusion, space-time and movement or, according to Tschumi, the replacement of *utilitas* or function by the event.

SOUND DIMENSION IN THEATRE. HOW SOUND INFLUENCES SPACE: THE JOËL POMMERAT'S THEATRICAL CASE STUDY

Rafaël Magrou

Cinema devices are increasingly present on the theatre stage. Large movie screens are often part of set, amplifying stage effects. As two-dimensional images provide close-ups and reveal back stage events, the sound dimension participates alongside with microphones and speakers. The acoustic space has been transformed. Is this to support weak actors' voices or to compensate for acoustic defaults in architecture halls? Or is it to immerse the audience, to create a more powerful and emotional journey? How, with these components, do theatres remain the locale of text, of the voice and of the authenticity?

Using several examples of sound systems in contemporary theatrical approaches, we will explore the work of the French author and director, Joël Pommerat's very deliberate use of sound in conjunction with dramaturgic writing to create a sense of space. Through this case study, this essay aims to demonstrate the possibilities sound devices can bring to the stage and how it can be used as a voices support to bring actors closer to spectators and to reach a more intimate relationship. We will also develop the stage soundscape concept and "sound perspective" considering the combination of voices with other levels of sound to create special atmospheres.

This essay we propose will contribute to existing research for a PhD at the Bordeaux-Montaigne University, focused on the Joël Pommerat's stage spatiality with the aim of questionning the notion of fourth wall.

THE KINSHIPS OF TOMORROW: NEW FORMS OF RADICAL TOGETHERNESS IN AUDIENCE-PARTICIPATORY DANCE THEATRE

Stefan Jovanović

Fifty years from the birth of identity politics, in an age of extreme opinions, artistic agonism, existential and environmental crisis, what is the future of gathering? What are the sites of this gathering? Rather than simply relying on the failing institutions of democracy as our only social contract, how can we work and think intersectionally across the arts to hold space for

dissensus? How do we as creatives respond to rapidly shifting socio-political subjectivities, and the dissolution of cultural silos?
Through an exploration of audience participatory urban interventions and the creation of my recent theatre show *Constellations*, this paper contributes to agendas about tomorrow's kinship and the needs of the inter-generational, the collective, the neuro-diverse, the shamanic and the foolish. We must urgently interrogate how we think about metaphors of spatiality, temporality, and built environments for coming together in order to reconstitute today's socio-political climate with new spatial and therapeutic contracts. How do we negotiate the contracts of consent in audience participatory performances, whilst working with affect, empathy, and resonance? We cannot address the fundamental crises of environmental collapse, intergenerational trauma, and structural inequality from centuries of institutional discrimination, without also addressing the need to find new ways of being, moving, knowing through difference. I define the middle ground between these sites, events, and encounters as new forms of *Radical Togetherness*.

INVISIBLE RELATIONSHIPS: LIGHT, ART AND POLITICS IN THE PUBLIC SPACE

Tomás Ribas

Urban lighting, like theatre lighting, creates hierarchies in our visual field, influencing our attention and directing our sight to certain places. In this paper I intend to establish relations between public and theatre lighting to discuss how Governments and private corporations use artificial lighting as an instrument to stimulate consumption and production and as a means of surveillance in order to control the use of urban space at night.
To illustrate that I will present a photographic work, created during my master's research, called Follow Spot where I walked around the city of Porto with a torch, using it, like a stage lighting fixture, to highlight what was in the shadows. The resulted images exposes what is forgotten (or erased) by the public lighting of the city.

SETTING ARCHITECTURE IN MOTION BY MEANS OF PERFORMANCE

Višnja Žugić

When around a decade ago Bruno Latour and Albena Yaneva asked for 'a gun' in order to make all buildings move, referring to Étienne-Jules Marey's photographic tool, they acknowledged the inherent quality of architecture as a moving object, theoretically approaching it as a series of transformations, always in a continuous flow. This position brings into focus the notion of architecture as a changeable and productive entity, rather than a passive and finished material outcome. In that context, architecture can be examined through specific theories of performing arts and performativity, which are applicable outside the artistic realm – observing physical space 'as performance', or as the 'problem of performing arts'. In concentrating on this particular model of spatial performativity, as a temporary state of architecture in which it becomes an active producer (of meanings), I will identify three mechanisms through which architecture realises or gains its performative potentials, regardless of its primary use: mechanism of Confrontation, related to the concept of frontality, mechanism of Correlation, related to the theatrical concept of complicité, and mechanism of Framing, related to the sociological concept of keying. All three mechanisms, of confrontation, correlation, and framing, presuppose a dialogically structured context in which, for a limited period of time, the production of meanings occurs. During these processes, physical space is established as a dynamic and effective entity that challenges the conventional understanding of architecture as a purely static and motionless category.

TOWARDS A PRACTICE-AS-RESEARCH MODEL OF *PERFORMISE*: TAKING SCENOGRAPHY FOR *ANTIGONE THE UNBRAVE* (2019) AS A CASE STUDY

Yi-Chen Wu

The article argues that Patrice Pavis's (2013) notion of 'performise' is an improved, more developed concept as compared to mise en scène, performance design, and site-specificity. Performise can be seen as the creative interconnection between scenography and new dramaturgy, namely, ways of exploring the core of theatrical

performance to reflect contemporary issues. The interconnection indicates a performative shift in contemporary theatre in which the configuration of space is moving away from the conventional understanding of mise en scène, characterized as audio-visual representations of texts by directors, towards an evolving process of performances that involves the participation of creation teams and spectators. The current version emphasises 'Practice as Research (PaR)' approach in which researchers experiment with designs that entail a deep investigation of theory rather than attempt to establish a framework before or after scenography. My decision to use PaR is based on my success in employing this methodology during two recent scenographic works which helped uncover some of the necessary factors by which performise is embodied. Building on these discoveries, this article examines my scenography for *Antigone The Unbrave* (2019) as a case study. The piece was held in an old, partially renovated theatre chosen because the venue was available, but which was disadvantageous to make experimental performance. Had I not employed a PaR methodology, the venue's potential to embody performise would not have been revealed. In this article, I summarize my current research project that employs the notion of performise to develop a practical model for creating scenography in contemporary theatre. This performise-based model enables the architectural structure to perform in a dramaturgical articulation: the texture and content of the building is applied in my scenography to configure the performers' movement and to stimulate dynamic reactions and perceptions of spectators during the performance.

TRANSFORMATION OF THE FOUND ENVIRONMENT IN PERSIAN PASSION THEATRE

Zahra Fuladvand and Judit Csanadi

Throughout theatre history, before the architectural and rigid separation between auditorium and stage, many performative events such as celebrations, religious rites and annual festivals were held in the outdoor found environment – in the street, private houses or taverns. What is now called environmental theatre was once part of a long tradition that had its roots in the European medieval theatre and numerous examples of non-western, eastern theatres such as Persian passion theatre.

Any natural environment preserving its original function without being changed into a fixed stage or a theatre building could be called the found environment. This outdoor found environment was the space that established a relationship between a man and the culture where they both participated in molding each other. It was the space where concepts of how they related and should have related to themselves, to one another and to the world were explored and celebrated. There are many examples of performative events happening in the found environment, but this research paper will examine an old, traditional type of theatre that happens every year at Muharram festival in Iran, in the social found environment.

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